

AMISH and MENNONITE CHURCH

Centennial Anniversary

Near Wellman & Kalona, Iowa



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EAST UNION MENNONITE CHURCH

(1889)

D. J. FISHER, Bishop

A short history of the settlement, organization and progress of the Amish and Mennonite Church in the Iowa, Johnson and Washington counties area, near Wellman and Kalona, Iowa.

First settlement anniversary, August 9, 1946
Church organization anniversary, November 22, 1951

Published by the
MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF IOWA

Compiled by ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER
1953

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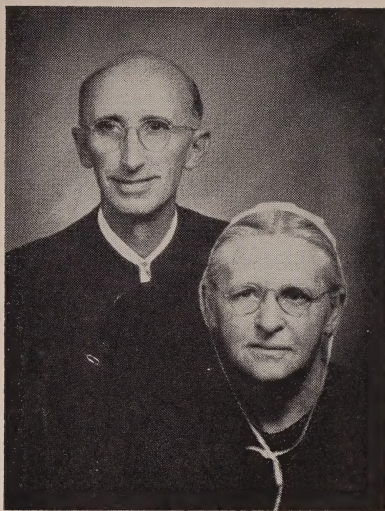
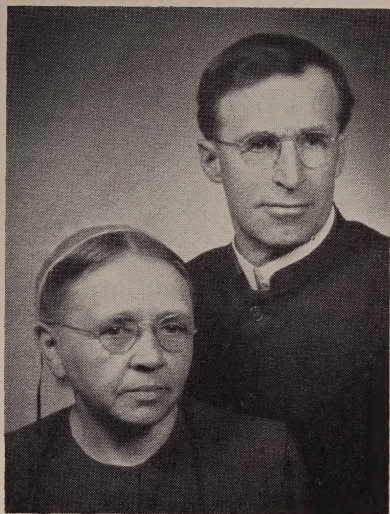
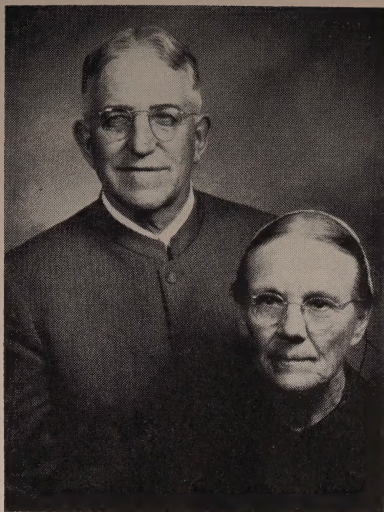
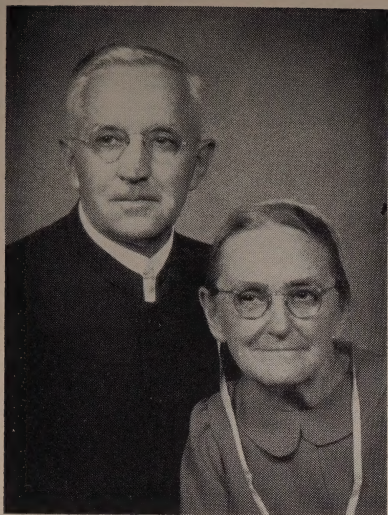
MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF IOWA

Compiled by ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER
1953

Ministers and Deacons and their wives who lived in the community at the time of the 1951 Centennial meeting.



First row, left to right: Mrs. Henry H. Miller, Mrs. Ammon Stoltzfus, Mrs. George S. Miller, Mrs. Edward Diener, Mrs. George Reber, Mrs. Levi C. Schrock, J. L. Hershberger. Second row: Henry H. Miller, Ammon Stoltzfus, George S. Miller, Edward Diener, George Reber, Levi C. Schrock. Third row: Mrs. Max Yoder, Mrs. Morris Swartzendruber, Mrs. Albert S. Miller, Mrs. Amos Gingerich, Mrs. Paul T. Guengerich, Mrs. Harvey M. Yoder. Fourth row: Max Yoder, Morris Swartzendruber, Albert S. Miller, Amos Gingerich, Paul T. Guengerich, Harvey M. Yoder. Not in picture: Mr. and Mrs. A. Lloyd Swartzendruber, Mr. and Mrs. Jake J. Miller.



Upper Left: Bishop D. J. Fisher and wife Ida. East Union Church.

Upper Right: Bishop Simon Gingerich and wife Lena. Born in community. Moderator first meeting.

Lower Left: Bishop John Y. Swartzendruber and wife Cora. Lower Deer Creek Church.

Lower Right: Bishop Elmer G. Swartzendruber and wife Mary. Upper Deer Creek-Fairview Church.

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the first few families of Amish folks came to Iowa in 1846, there were among them those who had a deep seated conviction of the real value in contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). These characteristics then continued to grow and develop until today there are those whose ancestors were among that group, who together with others had a real concern that at all times those living may learn more fully to appreciate their blessed heritage of Christian fortitude and pioneering spirit of that time.

In order to commemorate that worth-while event of a hundred years ago, in a tribute that is both fitting and consistent, several meetings were held, both in 1946 and again in 1951, to arrange for a suitable program and qualified speakers for the occasion.

At the meeting in 1946, which was a memorial of those first families who settled here in 1846, we felt it in order that qualified outside speakers be used, while at the meeting in 1951, which was in commemoration of the actual organization of the church as a corporate body of believers, it was decided to use only such talent that was either resident here at the time, or else such who were descendants from those pioneer ancestors of a hundred years ago.

Even though to many of us it may seem a bit unfortunate that so much time has elapsed before this work is published, and an apology is due for its delay, we are nevertheless convinced it has a real value, not only to the present generation, but for the future in bringing together some historical data and development of the Church from its beginning over 425 years ago with special regard and emphasis as it pertains to the immediate community in which we live.

The careful and able discourses on the various subjects pertaining to the faith by the qualified and capable brethren, Simon Gingerich, Harold S. Bender, John C. Wenger, Guy Hershberger and Melvin Gingerich, are of such a nature that I would like to urge every member of the Mennonite and Amish churches of the area to read and study them carefully, confident that there is real value for all.

The complete congregation and ministerial list at the close of the book furnishes much food for thought and study and will be appreciated by many.

We humbly submit this brief work for your study and interest, and with profound gratitude to all those who have contributed toward making it possible as well as to all who by their presence made these two days of fellowship a time long to be remembered.

May the covenant of the Lord be unto "us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." (Deut. 5: 3)

ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER

PROGRAM

Centennial meeting commemorating the settlement of Amish-Mennonite people in the Iowa-Johnson-Washington counties area in 1846.

EAST UNION CHURCH

August 9, 1946

Moderator: SIMON GINGERICH, Wayland, Iowa

Choristers: ORA KEISER, Kalona, Iowa

EDWIN SWARTZENDRUBER, Manson, Iowa

FORENOON SESSION

- 9:00 Song Service
9:15 Devotion W. S. GUENGERICH, Wellman, Iowa
9:30 Address of Welcome . . . D. J. FISHER, Kalona, Iowa
9:45 The Faith of a People and Its Effect on a Community
H. S. BENDER, Goshen, Ind.
10:30 Glimpses of Community Mennonite History
ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER, Wellman, Iowa
MELVIN GINGERICH, Newton, Kansas
11:30 Closing

AFTERNOON SESSION

- 1:00 Song Service
1:15 Devotion
1:30 The Beginning of the Mennonite Church in Switzerland, 1525
JOHN C. WENGER, Goshen, Ind.
2:15 Iowa Mennonites in the Larger Work of the Church
GUY F. HERSHBERGER, Goshen, Ind.
2:45 Short Talks
Offering
4:30 Closing

EVENING SESSION

- 7:30 Song Service
7:45 Devotion
8:00 The Mennonite Conception of the Church
H. S. BENDER, Goshen, Ind.
8:45 Sermon: Maintaining the Faith JOHN C. WENGER, Goshen, Ind.

Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days,
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let thy praise our tongues employ.

Sung at the opening of the above all day program, this hymn struck the keynote of that which followed throughout the day.

PART I

CENTENNIAL PROGRAM OF FIRST SETTLEMENT

August 9, 1946

Wm. S. Guengerich, a grandson of the very first settler, led in the devotion, by reading———, after which the address of welcome was given by Bishop D. J. Fisher of the East Union Church.

The first subject on the program, "The faith of a people and its effect on a community," was ably taken care of by H. S. Bender, and it is sincerely to be regretted that this was not made a matter of record and therefore can not be given herewith.

GLIMPSES OF COMMUNITY MENNONITE HISTORY

By Elmer G. Swartzendruber

The Bible means very little to those who do not want to be, and therefore are not interested in it. We do not contend that history is of equal, or even comparable value to the Bible, but we do find some close similarities. For instance, it is true that folks who care very little for that which was in the past, or for that which is to be in the future, living almost entirely in that which now is, do not find the real pleasure that life affords.

Many have by mere accident been brought face to face with some real inspiring fact of history which has made them become interested, yes even enthused, and have found such facts to have a definite bearing for the present, both for themselves and for others.

In the interests of this day it is to be expected that our especial concern lies with those of our ancestors who were the pioneers, and who shouldered the responsibilities of such a venture 100 years ago that took no small degree of courage and Christian fortitude to carry through. Therefore as we extol the merits of those who first came to this community may we not be understood to undervalue the high caliber and efficient leadership of the many others who came later to this as well as to other areas of the state, be they Mennonites or not. Among our Amish ancestors who came here we especially refer to those who in our estimation were the real pioneers. When we consider the emphasis which Mennonite folks have always placed on the value and absolute need of a regu-

lar means of unitedly worshipping the Lord in order to maintain the faith, then we can probably better understand what it meant 100 years ago to leave home and friends and under conditions of travel then, attempt a trip of 600 to 1000 miles with means of conveyance as they were, which would be somewhat comparable to a journey around the world today. For these reasons I consider the folks who came prior to the date of an organized church here, the outstanding pioneers of the group.

By this we do not mean to belittle the outstanding contribution which others of later years have made. In fact the body of ordained men here today has just as definite a place in the plans of our God in carrying out our mission for Him in the particular time He has allotted for us to live.

Then again while we speak of the men who undertook that momentous task, may we not forget the part which their companions, the mothers, had in this great movement. Can we picture a family of four or five children, the youngest only six weeks old, coming across the Allegheny mountains by wagon, then down the Ohio and up the Mississippi rivers by boat, and again the last fifty miles overland to a place of which they knew very little? To them a childlike faith in a living Christ found expression in obedience to His Word, and this was coupled with a confidence and a trust that they are in the will of God. This then is the foundation they have built upon, "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." 1 Cor. 3:10.

In giving a few glimpses of the history of 100 years ago we will refer to each family here prior to 1851 when the church was organized.

In 1845 Daniel P. Guengerich, a married man, and his half-brother Joseph J. Swartzendruber came here to look for a place to locate. Joseph scratched his name on a linn tree on the farm which he entered the next year. Guengerich did the same on a tree farther down the creek. These men then returned to their homes in the east and made preparations for the more permanent move to Iowa the following year. So in 1846 Daniel P. Guengerich, wife and four children, William Wertz, wife and probably two children, and Joseph J. Swartzendruber, single, came in April while that same fall the Peter B. Miller family of ten came too. In the fall of '46 Swartzendruber however returned to Maryland where he remained for ten years before he made his permanent settlement in Iowa, this time with his wife and five children. Samuel D. Guengerich was a nine-year-old son in the Daniel P. Guengerich home when they came to Iowa, and he seemingly inherited from his father the characteristics of an historian, and it is due to his careful and painstaking effort that the historical data of those earlier years was recorded and preserved. From these Guengerich records, either the original, or copies made from them,

which are in our files, it is that we find the following families' names as those having moved here for permanent homes prior to the actual organization of the church in 1851.

Daniel P. Guengerich, wife and 4 children	Apr. 1846
William Wertz, wife and probably 2 children	" "
Peter B. Miller, wife and 8 children	Oct. "
Daniel Schoettler, wife and 8 children	Apr. 1850
John Kempf, wife and 11 children	Sept. "
Benedict B. Miller, wife and 3 children	" "
Jacob Swartzendruber, wife and 1 child	Apr. 1851
Frederick Swartzendruber and wife	" "
John (Johannes) Guengerich, wife and 3 children	" "
Christian J. Guengerich, wife and 4 children	" "
Daniel J. Guengerich, wife and 3 children	" "
Henry Stutzman and wife	" "

Supposedly Elizabeth, 19-year-old daughter of John Kempfs, George, 20-year-old son of Jacob Swartzendruber, and Elizabeth, 20-year-old daughter of John Guengerich, were also members of the church at this time and together make up the total of 27 members when the church was organized in 1851.

Some of these families came from Fairfield County, Ohio, and others from Grantsville, Maryland. Just a few days ago my wife and I with several others came from Grantsville, Maryland, to Iowa in two short days' travel, the same distance which it took my grandfather Joseph J. Swartzendruber 23 days to negotiate. As we crossed the Muskingum river at Zanesville, Ohio, we could easily imagine that probably at this same spot my grandmother Hershberger (Schoettler), as a child of five years with her parents 96 year ago, boarded the boat which went down this same river to Marietta, Ohio, there to get a larger one to go down the Ohio and up the Mississippi to Muscatine, then called Bloomington, and then overland with ox teams the rest of the way.

We shall now relate a number of happenings and experiences as related to us from the lips of my grandmother Lydia Hershberger. On their trip from Ohio while waiting at Marietta for the next boat to leave a day or so was spent at the hotel, and she a five-year-old girl strayed off down the street following a person who had given her some candy, and thus she became lost. A short time later she was missed and a search made when a woman down the street who was ironing inside her open kitchen door told them of seeing a girl answering such a description going a certain way, and this gave a clue which followed, proved to be the

means of her return. While on the trip down the Ohio river there was always a rivalry between the boat crews to see who could reach the destination first. This was in order that a greater part of the return load of freight could be had for the return trip. In this way they also had their thrill, the captain of their vessel doing his utmost to reach the maximum speed, even resorting to the burning of some of the furniture to obtain more steam for the purpose. In doing this the passengers felt they were being subjected to unnecessary hazards and grandfather Schoettler tried to persuade the captain to refrain but to no avail.

Upon their arrival in Iowa the snakes were large and plentiful. Once when grandmother was a teenage girl and was out in the barnyard milking she heard the noise of a rattlesnake and called her brother Joseph who after killing the snake placed it into a half bushel measure and it completely filled it up. In their home they had a dog called Major who was real handy in the art of killing snakes, and frequently when the family was sitting in their house yard of an evening and the dog caught sight of a snake, they all had to flee for cover because after he was through with the reptile some of the pieces might be seen hanging on the siding of the house. The Schoettler family lived at first the first house south of the East Union church and it was no unusual thing for them to walk to the Deer Creek area, ten miles and more, on a Saturday evening in order to be there for services the next day. Or to go by team and wagon early on Sunday morning even though services were four or five miles away.

Several years ago in a conversation with Mrs. Christian Swartzendruber of Davis County, Iowa, she related how she came to Johnson County for the wedding of Christian C. Swartzendruber and Elizabeth Eash, and at which time a group of eight young folks walked to Iowa City to obtain the marriage license for this couple. She declared they had more pleasure in doing this than the young folks can possibly have with the modern means of conveyance, which is undoubtedly true.

In speaking of the hardships of those days, my senior bishop Gideon A. Yoder told how his father, Bishop Abner Yoder, came from near Sharon to the Joetown district to officiate at a wedding of Jacob Gingerich and Mary Schlabaugh, on the farm now owned by Harvey J. Miller, and how the snow was so deep that he soon had to unhitch his team from the sleigh, and went horseback, but soon that too did not work and so he walked the rest of the way. The people at the church were waiting for him but it was one o'clock in the afternoon when they saw him coming from the south, and they met him with shovels the rest of the way. He was almost frozen and had to warm up a little before he could go on with

the service. He told them that after this they would need to come and get him under similar circumstances. In those days their needs were of course not so great, but there were some things like taxes that needed to be met and could not be avoided. A common custom was to have in the home what was known as the tax box into which during the year the odd pieces of money were dropped with a prayer that there would be enough in it to satisfy the need, and remarkably often it did contain just enough.

Postage was not always prepaid as it is now and someone going to Iowa City would bring the mail along home for all the neighbors, paying the postage and collecting afterwards.

Eli Kinsinger related to me how in 1866 when they came to Iowa City by train, and had to wait several days before they could cross the river, and then it had to be on floating cakes of ice, how they had to cooperate with each other on some of the smaller cakes in the exchange of their position on it, to keep from sinking.

The following are some of the earliest land entries that were made from 1846-50:

Joseph Swartzendruber Jan. 8, 1846, 80 acres now on the Joel Schlaubaugh farm. This likely should be June 8 as that was the day when William Wertz entered his eighty and these two men walked together to Dubuque for this purpose. William Wertz June 8, 1846, 80A north of timber church on west side of road. Daniel P. Guengerich, June 20, 1846, 40A west of Eli King's house. June 26, 40A south of timber church just across the road. June 26, 80A where Al Miller's barn now stands. Christian Guengerich Apr. 19, 1850, 40A now on John H. Schlaubach farm. Daniel Schoettler June 21, 1850, 80A south side of road on Elmer G. Swartzendruber farm.

Thinking of some of the experiences of those early pioneers we may well ask the following questions:

1. Why did they come? To find a home but also for religious reasons.
2. What kind of people were they? They were folks with courage, with vision, and with a simple faith in God.
3. What did it mean for them to come? It meant many hardships but it also meant many blessings, and of these we still reap today, and may we humbly bow in prayer and thanksgiving to God that we may faithfully cling to the faith of our fathers unto the end of time for us here, and that our posterity may be able to see in that which we do today the same blessed heritage handed down to them.

The July 1946 issue of *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* contains translations of documents relating to Bishop Jacob Swartzendruber, the first Amish Bishop in this place. A reprint of this together with other

material is also in booklet form available here today. In these booklets, however, the following corrections should be made: Page 3 add to line 17 the name of "Joseph" as a son. In lines 18 and 20 erase the first "great" in "great-great" grandsons. In third line from bottom also erase the first "great" in "great-great." On page 6 in footnotes the unbroken chain of six generations of bishops needs to be verified, since it seems that Christian Jr. was not a bishop, although the other five are known to have been. On page 14 the address of Elmer G. Swartzen-druber should be Wellman instead of Kalona, Iowa.

INTRODUCTION BY

Moderator: Simon Gingerich

Here is another one of our historians. This time from the eastern section of the country, not a native of Iowa, but a student of history and Bible doctrine, very much interested in the history of the Mennonite Church, at the present time one of the professors of our college at Goshen—Brother John C. Wenger, who will speak to us on the subject, "The Beginning of the Mennonite Church in Switzerland in 1525."

THE BEGINNING OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH IN SWITZERLAND

By J. C. Wenger

It is indeed a pleasure to be here with you on this anniversary service today and I hope that we may all have a still greater appreciation for our heritage of faith and life at the closing of these sessions.

I want to try to tell you in about a half hour this afternoon the story of how our brotherhood was founded in Switzerland in 1525. I think we ought to start out with a few words about the first founder of the church—his name some of the younger people may have never heard. He left no books, he never reached the age of thirty, he served in our brotherhood in the ministry less than two years, he had a very short life and his name was almost forgotten. The name of this first founder was Conrad Grebel. Conrad Grebel came from one of the families of the nobility in Switzerland, his father was a prominent man in the city; prominent even in the country of Switzerland. A wealthy man of a patrician family, the father's name was Jacob Grebel.

Conrad Grebel was born somewhere around the year 1498. Of course, he had all the advantages that wealth and social prestige could give him as a young man and was sent off to University when he was probably something like fifteen or sixteen years of age. He studied for one year at

the University of Basel in Switzerland; then he transferred to the University of Vienna in 1515 where he remained for three years and studied the classics in Greek and Latin. He studied in Vienna with a scholarship, as we would say today, from Duke Maximilian.

In 1518, after three years in Austria, he went to France to the University of Paris. And there he remained two years, so that in all he had the advantage of six years of training in the ancient languages and learning. He was not a particularly pious young man; rather, he was perhaps a typical Catholic University student of those days; rather reckless in his attitudes. He never secured a doctor's degree; he wasted his money and his time. People seem to be free to bring in a little humor here today; I was reading one of Grebel's letters to his brother-in-law one time and when he signed off the letter at the end he said "sniff onions and go hang." That gives you some idea of the spirit that he had when he was in that particular humor.

He returned to his home city of Zurich in 1520 a rather discouraged young man. His health had broken down, his standing with his father had collapsed, he had not done well in his school work as far as bringing it to a successful conclusion was concerned. He was a gifted young man as far as scholarship was concerned. He was brilliant, he was able, he was promising, but spiritually he was discouraged. He did not have a real foundation for happiness or peace; he had not lived a spiritual life. And the man who was a great help to him was Zwingli, the prominent reformer and founder of the reformed church in Switzerland.

But before we go into that story of the reformation and the founding of the Anabaptist group, I would like to say just a word about the Catholic Church of that time. Why did there need to be a reformation and why was it that a large part of Christendom broke away from Rome in the early sixteenth century and established what we now know as the reformation churches? I would like to point out a few things about the Catholic Church in that era which are, I think, practically all true, even today.

The first is that the Catholic Church had a strange theory of salvation and of the Christian life. The Catholic Church did not then and does not now have the same point of view as Protestants do. For instance, we are all accustomed to hearing it emphasized that salvation is by faith—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But that was not the basic emphasis of the Roman Catholic Church. Its emphasis falls on the sacraments. The sacraments are thought of as so many wires bringing power down to us from heaven. Or as so many pipes bringing the grace of God down to us from heaven. It is not a matter of an individual's soul laying hold on Christ

by faith; it is a matter of uniting yourself with our Holy Mother, the Church, and receiving from the church the sacraments which convey grace directly to the soul, when administered by properly ordained priests. That is the theory of salvation that the Catholic Church emphasized for a thousand years before the time of the reformation and still does.

And there were many things in their religious life which were objectionable to the founders of the Protestant groups. Things like the worship of Mary and the worship of the saints, prayer to Mary and prayer to the saints, holy water, holy oil, holy buildings, holy people. I mean the idea the priests, for instance, have some special superior powers by virtue of their ordination so they stand over the rest of Christians and between those Christians and God—that type of thinking.

There was a great emphasis in the Catholic Church for a long time and still is on what we call asceticism. The idea that just because we enjoy a thing, therefore it is considered wrong. If we enjoy eating, then we should abstain from eating certain things on certain occasions and so on, so that we achieve some sort of merit with God. This led very early in the history of the Catholic Church to celibacy, to men and women remaining unmarried and devoting themselves to the life of the church in a special way, living apart from society, not owning property personally and abstaining from all the joys of married life. That was objected to by the reformers.

And that point that was mentioned a moment ago about the priests standing between ordinary believers and God was very objectionable to men like Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli who were trying to reform the church. The reformers emphasized that we are all priests in the sight of God. We all have access to God through Jesus Christ, our high priest, and no man stands between believers in Christ and the Lord; therefore, the reformers objected to oracular confession. They objected to Christians going to some delegated priest and regularly confessing their sins to that man and receiving forgiveness. In other words, the whole idea of merit, of achieving credit by good work with God was objectionable to men like Zwingli in the course of time.

Well, that was one area of the Catholic Church that brought about the reformation—that led to the reformation. Another was the conception of the church itself. Our emphasis, of course, of the church is that we are a brotherhood. One is your master, even Christ, and ye are all brethren. Even the ordained men in the church are still brethren with the congregation. They remain brethren. They are not standing between the church and God in any sense of being a special priest. They have no spe-

cial superior powers by virtue of their ordination. We are all brethren, all in one love. That is the reason we have feet washing, of course, to symbolize the fact that we are a part of a brotherhood and all belong together. We all want to show that willingness to serve to one another.

But that is not the emphasis of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is a heirarchical church. You have levels of authority. You start down with ordinary members and then you have parish priests, and then you go on up to the bishops and archbishops and so on and finally you have one man standing at the top, at the head of the whole church all over the earth, the Pope. That was very objectionable to men like Zwingli, the reformer of Switzerland, of German-speaking Switzerland. That whole priest-pope system was objectionable.

Then the church at that time and still is in certain places of the world, a state church and in Germany everybody in a given territory was considered a member of the church, of the established church of that area, Roman Catholic at that time, of course, because he had been received into that church as an infant. The church and state were organically tied together. I will talk about that more in a few moments. The sum of the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church was objectionable to the reformers. Particularly the doctrine of the mass, which is the central act of worship in the Roman Catholic Church. The teaching is that in the mass Jesus Christ is offered to God again, even as he was offered in Calvary, only it is a bloodless sacrifice. Well, that was the central point of objection on the part of the reformers to the whole Roman Catholic system. Then there were certain doctrines that in the course of time the reformers objected to—the doctrine of purgatory, for instance, and the doctrine of indulgences. In fact, it was a controversy over indulgences that touched the fire off in the first place between Martin Luther and the Roman Catholic Church. I don't think I should take much time to talk about indulgences. The idea is that it is based, I should say, on the concept that when we are in Christ, the guilt of our sins is forgiven but the necessity of suffering for those sins is not cancelled. Therefore, we need to suffer in this life for our sins and we can add to that suffering in this life by putting ourselves to inconvenience in suffering for the church. We can go on pilgrimages; we can give large gifts of money to the church, and so on. Now, when Christians die, not having suffered sufficiently for their sins in this life, they cannot enter heaven, but go to purgatory, according to the teaching of the Roman Church. In Germany, a man by the name of John Tetsell sold indulgences and I believe Tetsell had a little rhyme which he said, "You pay for your friends and get them out of purgatory." Now the money, of course, was helping to

build a large cathedral down in Rome and Luther in Germany was much outraged by that whole system and protested against it. And by doing so, started off the reformation as I indicated a moment ago.

Another difference between the Roman Catholic Church and the reformation church, Protestants, concerned the norm of authority. What is the final authority in faith and life? The answer of the Roman Catholic Church is the Bible and tradition. In other words, a Catholic is not at all obliged, from his point of view, to have Bible for everything that he believes and everything that he practices, it is sufficient to have the church teach it. There are all kinds of illustrations of that, and that is an accepted point of view in the Roman Catholic Church. And that again was a very crucial difference between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Men like Luther and Zwingli began to say, we must have Bible for our doctrines. And Luther said, anything that is in the church that is against the scripture, we must do away with. And Zwingli went a little bit farther and said that everything that is in the church that isn't taught in the scripture must be done away with. Even the neutral things have to go if they are not definitely taught in scripture.

Now I want to say that Luther did a great work and was a great man and Zwingli was a grand leader in Switzerland and did much good and helped convert Grebel to a personal conversion to a faith in Christ. He took him when he was a more or less indifferent Catholic young man and made of him a very earnest student of the scriptures and a man devoted to the will of God. Zwingli did his work primarily through gospel teaching. In those days, it was customary to preach on certain texts out of the Bible—certain sections of the Bible were to be read. But Zwingli started in Matthew 1:1 and he preached right through from the book of Matthew consecutively Sunday by Sunday and somebody said it created a greater stir in Switzerland than the discovery of America in 1492.

Zwingli began his gospel preaching about 1519. He was a wonderful preacher. One man said that when Zwingli preached, it felt like Zwingli had reached out and held him by his hair. Zwingli held great debates with the Roman Catholics and tried to show from the scriptures why he was teaching what he was teaching. He also gave considerable guidance to the state, to the government of that time and place in Switzerland. And, as I said, Zwingli insisted only what is Biblical may remain. The mass must go! It is the greatest of all abominations, he said. The monasteries must be cleaned out. These monks and nuns must desert that kind of a life and take unto themselves life companions. All sensuous aids to worship, pictures and so on, in the churches must go. We are not to worship God in holy buildings with pictures, Zwingli said. We will

whitewash over them. We will take out the images, and so on. We will have meeting houses, not cathedrals. That was Zwingli's emphasis, that type of thinking.

The whole sacramental system of salvation must be done away with and we must restore faith in Jesus Christ as the central thinking. Infant baptism must go, Zwingli said. There is no point in baptizing a baby; he doesn't know what it is all about. Wait until the child comes to years of understanding and then baptize him.

Now, if Zwingli had gone on with that program, there would have been no Mennonite Church. Conrad Grebel was working at his side, enthusiastic, happy, looking forward to the day when Switzerland was to have a truly evangelical church and the mass and all the Catholic abuses would be done away with. But alas, alas—it didn't work out quite that way. In the disputation of October, 1523, Zwingli had intended before he came to the meeting to ask that at that meeting the mass be abolished, but he saw that the political authorities were not yet ready for that move. And so he retreated a little bit in his strategy and said, we won't go any faster than what the city council approves. And a friend of Conrad Grebel's stood up and said, you have no right to say that. He said, the Spirit of God has decided this matter. The scripture is clear. We must follow the scripture. We cannot delay any longer the abolition of the mass. We must do away with it right now.

Well, Zwingli stood by his decision and Conrad Grebel and his friends stood by theirs. It is time to do away with the mass. And so there was tension. Zwingli and Grebel got into an argument right there. Grebel wanted to know, why do we do this—why do we mix water with wine, he says, in the communion? Nothing is said in the Bible about that. Why is it when we take communion we have to get down and open our mouths like we don't have any hands—nothing in the Bible like that. Zwingli said, do you want to be so scrupulous? Why, then you would have to meet together for the Lord's Supper in the evening and wash feet too. And so they argued. To make a long story short, that tension began between Zwingli and Grebel and Grebel's friends that October 1523 and continued for something over a year until January, 1525, when the final break came.

Now in the meantime, Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz, a friend of his and colleague, had begun to hold Bible meetings. Conrad Grebel used to stand with a Greek Testament and teach the people in German from this Greek Testament. Felix Manz did the same with the Hebrew Old Testament.

Finally, the city council saw that it had to take action and on January

17, 1525, a great disputation was held between Conrad Grebel and two of his friends, Jörg Blaurock and Felix Manz, and on the other hand, Zwingli and his friends. Well, Zwingli took the point of view that he had adopted some time before, that he would not move any faster than the city council approved. Conrad Grebel took the position the city council had nothing to say in matters of faith—we are going to follow the word of God, so the city council had to decide who had won the debate and they decided that Zwingli had won the debate. Zwingli said it would be dangerous to have any more debates.

The next day, January 18, the city council decided that anybody who failed to baptize his children when they were born had to be exiled from the country. And three days after that, on January 21, the city council issued a decree that Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz were to quit holding Bible meetings. What would *you* do under such circumstances? They probably held another one to talk it over. In any case, we know that a few days after the debate of January 17, they did just that. They came together to decide what to do. We have an account of that interesting meeting. It was preserved in the Chronicles of the Huterarian Brethren, an Anabaptist group that goes back to 1528, and before that had a common history with our group. This account says that when they were together, great fear came over them and the fire of God burned in their hearts and they fell upon their knees and cried upon God, the searcher of hearts, the Almighty, that he would give them grace to do his divine will, for they knew what suffering they would have to endure.

Zwingli was beginning to show himself a hard man. I said already he did much good and I am standing by that. But he was showing himself a hard man. There is a statue of Zwingli in Switzerland with a sword in one hand and a Bible in the other. It is not altogether inappropriate. As early as 1526, the next year, Zwingli had Conrad Grebel's father beheaded. He was not a member of the Anabaptists. He never followed his son, but he was the leader of the minority group in the Senate and opposed the severe persecution of the Anabaptists, as our forefathers were then known.

Well, in any case, after this group of fifteen people had had their prayer, they arose from prayer and Jörg Blaurock, who was a strong leader in his own right, spoke up to Conrad Grebel and asked him for baptism. And Conrad Grebel was a lay member, a Catholic lay member up to that point—no one ordained him, no one commissioned him to be baptized, but somebody had to inaugurate believers' baptism, as these men had been taught by Zwingli was Biblical. And so Conrad Grebel took the step. He baptized Jörg Blaurock and Jörg Blaurock in turn

baptized the others and the Mennonite Church was founded. They, of course, did not use the term Mennonite. They called each other simply brethren. And because they lived in Switzerland, we call them the Swiss brethren, to distinguish them from other brethren groups in our world today.

And so the church was born late in January of 1525. What were the issues? Perhaps we could sum up some of the issues between Conrad Grebel and his friends on the one hand, this young man who would then have been something like twenty-seven years of age, and Zwingli on the other hand.

The first issue was the tempo of the reform. How fast shall we go in abolishing the Catholic practices which they believed were abuses and unscriptural? Well, Zwingli said, we will move cautiously. We will go slowly enough so that we can carry along the political authorities and the whole population and we will retain the state church. Oh, no, we won't, Grebel said. We are not going to have any state church. We want to establish a church of believers only. A free church. One that is not connected with the state in any way. We will leave the people who are not converted outside the church, and anybody who wants to accept the baptism of faith and become a real Christian, we will take him into the church. No, we won't, Zwingli said. We are going to keep the state church. We can't abandon the masses like that. But the first issue was the tempo of the reform. How fast shall we go? When shall we abolish the mass? Grebel said we can't; we have waited too long already. Let us do it. No, Zwingli said; we will wait a little while. People aren't ready for it yet. That was the first and main issue to begin with.

Another thing was the thoroughness of the reform. How radical shall the reformation be? Shall we just correct the more outstanding Catholic abuses that have grown up over a millenium of time or shall we go all the way back to the New Testament and do away with everything in the church for which there is no New Testament support? I just said a few minutes ago that that is what Zwingli started out to do and that is why our forefathers had been so hopeful that Zwingli would continue, but at certain crucial points, Zwingli decided not to break with ecclesiastical tradition. Not to demand absolute obedience to the text of the New Testament. The matter of the state church is one illustration. Nothing in the New Testament about a state church. Our forefathers were right—in the New Testament time, the church was made up of individual believers who came voluntarily and became Christians and were inducted into the church by baptism. In other words, the question of the thoroughness of the reform, or you might put it, of a complete rejection of

church tradition as the norm of authority. That was a central difference between Zwingli and the brethren. Particularly on two points: the church which we are going to hear more about this evening and the matter of infant baptism. Why was it that our forefathers objected so strongly to infant baptism?

Well, to begin with, they found nothing of infant baptism in the New Testament. But I don't think that it is enough to say that. I think our forefathers were convinced that infant baptism not only lacked scriptural foundation but that in itself it was utterly incompatible with the true significance of baptism. Now, I can easily understand why Catholics baptize babies. It is quite understandable if you accept the Catholic premise. Catholics teach that children are born in sin and that they have to be baptized for their regeneration or they will die. If they die, they cannot go to heaven. Catholics teach that without any apology. And unbaptized babies can't be saved—can't go to heaven. I had a Catholic mother ask me that question just about a week ago. She had lost a child by drowning and the child had not been baptized; she wanted to know, was the child lost? For Protestants, I have no hesitancy in answering that question. They say children are saved through the merits of Christ, apart from personal faith because Christ redeemed the race, just as Adam condemned the race, so Christ redeemed it and all children in infancy are saved.

But what does baptism stand for? Our forefathers said baptism is the covenant. Baptism is the covenant of a good conscience with God; in baptism we make a complete commitment of ourselves to Christ. Not just that we give ourselves passively to him for salvation, but we dedicate ourselves to Christ, to love for him. That is the meaning of baptism and so our forefathers said, no we don't re-baptize—we just baptize. Pouring water on a baby isn't baptism, but because they did baptize believers and because these believers had been baptized as infants, they dubbed our forefathers re-baptizers, Anabaptists—they all mean the same thing.

Furthermore, not only on the matter of the church and not only on the matter of infant baptism—and there, of course, Zwingli back-tracked; he had originally taught believers' baptism—but also on things like the worship of Mary. For several years after the founding of the reformed church, the reformed theologians scolded the Mennonites or the Anabaptists as they were called then for not worshipping Mary. But eventually, of course, all Protestant groups gave that up.

Non-resistance was another point of difference between the founders of our church and Zwingli. I don't think it ever came up very much in dis-

cussion, but as early as 1524, Conrad Grebel had asserted vigorously that Christians do not go to war. We have a redemptive function in this world, not a killing function. Zwingli, on the other hand, went to war with the Catholics. He was going to fight for the faith; he took the sword; he perished with the sword. The Catholics took his dead body and cut it to pieces. So that was another difference. Four hundred years ago, our forefathers never talked about being a plain church; they always talked about being a church of non-resistant Christians. That is what they emphasized—the whole matter of non-resistance.

The oath was also an issue. That is to say, the Anabaptists taking the literal words of Jesus, "But I say unto you, swear not at all," insisted that we cannot swear oaths. The reformers said, yes, we can. Oaths were allowed to patriarchs in the Old Testament just like war, and so both of them are allowed today. That gives us a little picture of some of the issues between Conrad Grebel and Zwingli and how our church came to be founded in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1525.

In closing, I would like to say just a word about what happened in the next two or three years. Persecution set in immediately. Just a few weeks after these first baptisms, some of the brethren and sisters were arrested and thrown into prison. Imprisonment became more and more severe; they were sentenced to a diet of bread and water and gruel. They were to stay there until they died and rotted and stank. That is what the German says. Zwingli said they could stay there until they put up their hands or gave up the ghost, one or the other.

As early as May, 1525, four months after the church was founded, our first minister was put to death, a man by the name of Eberli Bolt. That was by Catholics. The first Protestant martyrdom, that is, martyrdom of a Mennonite by a Protestant, by Protestants, happened in January, 1527, two years after the founding of the church, this Felix Manz who used to have the Hebrew Bible lessons that I mentioned and whom the Amish sang about in their hymnal. Felix Manz was sentenced to be drowned for his faith, and in those days it was customary to burn men who were heretics and to drown women; to show their contempt for the Anabaptists, they decided to drown the man. The martyrdom took place at 3:00 in the afternoon, January 5, 1527. They took Manz out, tied his hands and his feet, pulled his knees up through his elbows, put a stick through it so he couldn't swim, put a rope on his body so that they could retrieve it, and threw him into the Limmat River. Before he was dropped into the water, he cried out in Latin, "In Manus tuas domine commendo spiritu meum," "Into Thy Hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." He didn't go to his death as a broken man; he marched down the street

preaching to the people who had come to see the martyrdom, and his brave mother stood on the other side of the river and called to her boy to be faithful. That is the kind of faith our forefathers had. Not one that would break down under a little social disapproval, but one that was strong enough for martyrdom; one that could stand up against all that the Devil and devilish people could contrive to lay upon them. It was a faith; it was not a dead legalism. It was a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was an obedience unto death. It was a taking up of the cross and following Christ.

When our forefathers talked about the cross, sometimes they meant the cross of Christ. But a great many times they meant our cross, what we bear by virtue of being Christians. And God was with them, and blessed them and strengthened them and the Lord took that light and he scattered it over Europe in a remarkable way. And we are here today because four hundred years ago a group of people decided they wanted to follow the word of God *in toto* and reject all ecclesiastical traditions for which there was no scriptural support. May we be as faithful as they in obeying the word of God.

THE MENNONITE CONCEPTION OF THE CHURCH

By H. S. Bender

Before I start, may I (H. S. Bender) say just a few words about Brother S. D. Guengerich, who was mentioned so often. If some of you come to Goshen College sometime to our archives and historical library, we will be glad to have you come and look at the old desk that Brother Guengerich used for so many years, many of his old books and manuscripts which the family has turned over to our historical library for safekeeping. Also a good many of the manuscripts which used to belong to Jacob Swartzendruber and his descendants and successors are on exhibition and are there also in safekeeping. We welcome you to come and look at these precious treasures that come out of the life of this community where they have been placed for the purpose of historical use.

We are to consider this evening what the church is and ought to be, and the subject says "The Mennonite Conception of the Church." Now, that suggests to us tonight that there is something that we as Mennonites have thought out and we want to hold to ourselves, and I am sorry for this subject. It is not the Mennonite Conception of the Church—it is the Biblical Conception of the Church, is the New Testament Conception. It is Mennonite because we have received it through the Mennonite people from the past. If anyone here tonight can tell us after this message is

over that this is not in the Bible, it is not scriptural and can show it to us, I am sure we will be glad to change it and conform to the Word of God, because as I know the Mennonite Church and the Amish Church, there is no deeper desire in our hearts nor spirit than to follow the Word of God in its fullness—to believe it with all our hearts and to obey every word of it. So I am really speaking tonight on the Scriptural Conception of the Church of Jesus Christ.

The first thing I notice as I look over our Mennonite life and history in this community is the central position of the church, the importance of the church. There have been times in the history of the church, in perhaps some denominations today, that the church is not thought to be important. One can belong to it, one can attend it once in a while, it is nice to have your name on the roll, but it is not a greatly important thing. Some kinds of Christians too will seem to think that right thinking about being a Christian is to be personally saved and if you are right with the Lord personally, that is all that is important. I have even met some people and perhaps you have too who think it isn't very necessary to have the church. In fact, they don't want to belong to the church. Once in a while, you even have some people who think that denominations are wrong and the best thing to do is to come out from all denominations, and they end up by having one more, even if it is small enough to contain just their local body or their own family. But for us the church is an important and central thing in Christianity, not above the Lord Jesus Christ—no, no. It is His church, but it is a great thing to have the church and to belong to it and to have its life and to be a part of it. This community would not be here if it were not for the church. We have had some immigration to America from Europe, but it has been national. We have had Germans coming, and Swedes coming and Norwegians and Italians because of great migration movements to America. But the great Mennonite and Amish communities are here because of the Christian Church and have no other reason. There is a fellowship and faith and life and truth and conviction that has held them together, and so it is important for us tonight to think about what this church is and what we understand it to be, what are the great characteristics of the church.

Now we can understand this only by looking back to the place and time out of which our church came and comparing it to what was then four hundred years ago and as I do so, we appreciate something that is hard for us to appreciate—we are so familiar with this conception of the church and we have it in our minds today and experience so that we can scarcely comprehend the time when it did not exist. We can scarcely be-

lieve that there was a time and an age in a country, a world in which most people had another conception of the church, but it was so. It is always a thrilling thing to me to go back four hundred years ago when this great new vision of the church was discovered. When men stood high for the first time with this great vision of the church and understanding of the church and based their lives upon it and paid the price of loyalty to it for the great vision. The church of that time, the professing universal Catholic Church of that time, was a different kind of a church than we think of as a church of Christ today, even the Protestant churches of that time, great as they were in many respects and their wonderful new teaching of salvation by faith in Christ and not by works, were still much the same kind of church as the Catholic Church was, and it was that—it was a church in which everybody belonged to church. The total population of a country was Christian and belonged to church. We think that sometimes in the United States we are pretty much of a Christian nation because half of our people belong to church—fifty percent of America professing church membership. I can take you back to Europe four hundred—five hundred—six hundred years ago and more recently I think too, when everybody belonged to church, still the case in Europe—Germany and Italy and France and England and Holland—everybody belongs to church, 95 percent. I remember the time when I was in Europe studying some twenty years ago and very interested in discovering that it was hard to get out of the church. If a man wanted to get out of the church, he had to go to the courthouse and make a petition and register.

Now, a world in which everybody belongs to church and in which the church's seating capacity isn't bigger than enough to handle more than ten percent of the population—where hardly more than ten percent ever go to church—that is a new kind of a church for us to think of. This church where everybody belonged and all people were Christians and all people out of their taxes supported the church, the state church concept, that can't be the true Christian church, but that is the kind of a church they had. The symbol of that church was infant baptism—that was the only way to get the whole population into the church except by sheer force. And so in Europe in the centuries ago there was a law that every new-born child was baptized as soon as possible, just as in the Old Testament every Jewish boy was circumcized at the end of eight days, if at all possible. Infant baptism, if that is the way to get into the church, gives us a different kind of church because an infant can't think, can't believe, cannot be converted, cannot follow Christ at eight days of age. I am glad for the many young children who feel that to become the child of God and follow Christ and give their hearts to Christ early, and I

certainly would hesitate to draw the line at any place and say that it is not good, although I see some dangers to it. But when it comes down to babes in arms being Christians and being a part of the church, that is a new concept of the church and one that we can't well comprehend. That is the kind of a church they had in those days. And if everybody belongs to church and you have all the common sins and ungodliness in a country as they had in those days and still have, and the people who commit these sins and live in these ungodly ways of life are still members of the church, then you have a different kind of a church.

And over against that, there came this great new vision and conviction of the Church of Jesus Christ is really according to the New Testament teaching which our forefathers taught, I believe, by the guidance and direction of the spirit of God, in which they believe with all their hearts and upon which they founded the Mennonite Church.

What was it? First, all membership in the church must be voluntary. That is common in America today and most Americans think of that being the right way, that individuals should join the church because they will to do so, because they want to do so, because of their own free decision. That was a great new vision of the church in those days and our forefathers of the Mennonite Church were the ones who first had it. Today it is common property in much of American Christianity of late. But more than that, to join the church meant then to have personal faith and experience in the Lord Jesus Christ and a newness of life and heart that comes from that experience and to follow Christ. But you can't be a Christian without having that faith and experience, without following Christ, without being his disciple, without having the life that corresponds. Now to become that kind of a Christian, that kind of a church member means a commitment of life personally, a decision; to join the church, then, would be a great act of dedication to God. That reminds us of what Jesus himself said so often, "If any man will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and come after me. If he wants to be my disciple, then deny himself and follow me. If you are my friends, do whatsoever I command you. If you love me, keep my commandments." All these familiar and precious teachings that Jesus himself gave were discovered in a wonderful new way by our forefathers and they said to be a Christian meant to have that kind of a life, that kind of a following of Christ and therefore the church must be composed of that kind of people and that kind only and if you are not willing to follow Christ, you cannot be a member of the church, and so they said we receive people into the church on a confession of faith, a newness of life and on a pledge to follow Christ. And then, of course, infant baptism goes

out of the picture. You cannot baptize infants on that kind of a ground; you baptize only adults and so adult baptism on confession of faith was a characteristic sign of the Mennonite Church. It was not the cause of the church and as our forefathers did not leave the Reformed Lutheran and Catholic Church because of infant baptism—no, they left because of the wrong conception of the Church and Christianity. Baptism just automatically changed and so baptism has always been in the church the sign of a cleansed heart and life and the promise to follow Christ in his work.

You remember the baptismal vow, Christian friends, in the Mennonite Church and the Amish Church, I think it is still the same as it has been for hundreds of years. As I recall, when I was baptized, the bishop asked me some questions first and among them was this question, "Are you willing to submit yourself to Christ and His word and to abide faithfully in the same unto death?" And only when I said yes could I be baptized. That kind of baptism means a promise, a pledge, a vow to follow Christ, and the Church therefore is a body of people who promise to follow Christ, to love him, and serve him. Now, when you have this kind of a church, then, some other consequences follow. One of the first things I see that comes says that this kind of a church will be separated from the evil world round-about. This is a precious part of our concept of the church.

I know that sometimes people have twisted and perverted the doctrine of separation and they have made it superficial or they have eliminated just certain peculiar things, but this is a great Christian truth, that the church of Jesus Christ must be kept clean and pure and separated from the evil of the world, in life, not just in theory, in outward as well as inward manner of life, in behavior and in conduct and spirit and desire and love and works.

Remember what Jesus himself said about the church; no, the Apostle Paul said in Ephesians, I think the fourth chapter, I am not quite sure just now, 4:22, he says that Jesus gave himself for the church that he might present the church with himself, spotless. And if that is Christ's own great vision of the church, his own purpose, then we are happy to have the same vision of the church—a spotless and pure church, kept clean from the world and its defilement. Individual lives kept clean and the church as a whole kept clean through separation. Not geographical isolation, not language isolation, not any kind of isolation. Jesus said specifically "no isolation from my church—I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil in the world." Some people have mistaken, even among Mennonites

and Amish, separation from isolation and if there ever were a time for spiritual isolation, that time is past. We cannot minister to a needy world and be isolated from it. In this community, we are no blessing to the community if we are isolated, but neither are we nor can we be if we are not separated. I mean by that a godly people. And once the line of separation with the worldly church is broken down and disappears, then the church is not in a place to help the world. There is the great vision of the church that we have, that it is a holy godly people called out from the world unto goodness and righteousness. But then there is another result from this concept of the church that applies to the people within its own right.

If we are going to have this kind of a church that is holy and righteous and clean and pure and separated, it is going to take what I would like to call at this point Christian discipline, and that has always been a part of the church in the concept of the Mennonite and Amish faith. I know perhaps that when some people think of discipline they rather shrink away from it and it is very unpleasant to them and they say, we don't want discipline; but perhaps all they are thinking of is a false kind of discipline, a perverted kind; perhaps they have had some sad experience with people in the past who thought that discipline was penalty and what the church ought to do was to penalize the mistakes and make them feel it and make them suffer for it. And there are some who have had experiences with those who thought that to exercise discipline was to exercise authority. Both concepts are wrong. If I read my New Testament rightly, the Apostle Paul tells us in Galatians that we are to restore those who fall. "Ye who are spiritual restore such in one who is overtaken in a sin," and the whole purpose of discipline according to the Mennonite concept that is right and true is one of restoration as redemption. All we mean to say by this is that we surround the weak and feeble and erring member with all the means of grace or the resources of the church or the help that we can give, including holding up the standard and warning of final judgment and that guided discipline, loving and helpful and restorative, that is an essential mark of the church of Jesus Christ. There is no true Mennonite Church, no true Amish Church, that does not have that kind of Christian discipline.

But one step further than that—this kind of church means a church that is a brotherhood in which all the members help one another and love each other and stand together and share their blessings and share their strength. This has been one of the great characteristics of the Mennonite concept of the church and has several applications. For one thing, it wipes out the line of distinction between classes in the church—wealthy

and poor and upper and lower classes—they ought to be gone in the Christian church—they ought to be gone forever. It wipes out the distinction between the clergy and the laity that is so characteristic of the Catholic Church and of the older churches. We sometimes use some of those expressions ourselves. We talk about the laity for want of a better word. We do not talk about the clergy—I am thankful for that. We do have our officers in the church. We believe in them. We have the office of bishop. We have the office of minister, but we conceive of these officers not as lords over God's heritage, but as servants of the church, as leaders of the church, as brethren who are set apart with special responsibility, and it is a sad day in the Mennonite church even if a leader of the church wants to fall back upon his authority rather than his spiritual leadership, because there is something that happens in the church when the spirit of brotherhood is destroyed by that kind of work in the church. It has happened, of course; it happens sometimes, but basically we want to have that kind of a church where we are all brethren and those who have, if I may say it this way, the highest office are the ones who ought to serve the most.

Remember what Jesus himself said, he said, "Let no one call you master; you are all brethren." This brotherhood concept of the church is something which is quite different from the common thought of the church in many parts of the world in Christian history and even denominations. It means among other things that right out of the midst of the brotherhood ought to come the servants and leaders of the people and everyone is expected to and should be willing to share in the life of the church. I believe it used to be the old custom and perhaps it still is in some places the custom that at the time of baptism the young men who were to be baptized are asked, among other questions, whether they are willing if called to accept the work of the minister. It used to be the rule if they refused to promise that they wouldn't be baptized. I remember some years ago meeting an older man who told me the story of a young man who many years ago refused to say he would be a minister if he were called and he stood outside the church for a number of years because he wouldn't yield to that question. I believe it even used to be the custom that the young women were asked such a question. My mother told me who was baptized about sixty years ago that when she was baptized over in Ontario, she was asked the question if she would be willing to be a minister's wife, if it should turn out that way.

There is something beautiful behind that thought, that thought that we are a brotherhood and we are all expected to carry the load of work and service in the church, if called upon. But more than that, in this concept

of brotherhood, is a deep sense of love for the members of the church and a willingness to help carry their burdens. And that reaches right down into not just the heart and emotions, but to the material possessions of the members. To take us back to the early days of the Mennonite Church hundreds of years ago, I could show you from the documents and records that in the early days of the church, it was expected that a member of the church was willing to place his worldly goods at the disposal of the brotherhood, if need be.

We have records back in 1555 in Strasbourg in Alsace in France when a certain outsider, if we can call him that, visited a Mennonite baptismal service, that is almost four hundred years ago, and he reported in his diary that one of the questions asked by the bishop of the candidates for baptism was that they would be willing, if need be, to place all their worldly goods at the disposal of the brotherhood for the sake of the needy. That was emphasized so strongly that outsiders often accused the brethren of being Communists. And they said no, we are not Communists. We simply believe that we are stewards of the possessions God has given us for the sake of the church. Talk about stewardship and stewardship campaigns, all we need to do in the Mennonite Church is to revive the ancient spirit that they used to have in the church on stewardship. We are getting too materially minded today, perhaps, and yet this spirit has been very strong among us—this spirit of helping each other—mutual aid.

You know how often in the experience of our community and our congregations and all the way back through the years we have used material aid to help each other, how we still do, how we still believe in it. We are just losing out somewhat in our pervasion for it. We are forcing some of our members out who need help in the world because we don't help them enough in the church, and it is part of the concept of the church. Loving, in other words, our forefathers said, is not just talk, isn't just feeling, it is action and that is our whole concept of the Christian life as well. If you love the brethren, all right, help them and remember what the Apostle John said, "If a man has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and doesn't help him how dwelleth the love of God in him?" "If you don't love your brethren whom you can see, how can you love God, whom you do not see?" I could talk a long time on this concept of brotherhood in the church because I think it is so important and I tell you it is attractive to everybody that knows about it, especially in this world today, where we have so much of the opposite brotherhood. It is a pity and a shame if the Christian Church, the Mennonite Church, becomes so much like the world that we lose the spirit of brotherhood

and each goes his own way and pile up wealth for ourselves and turn a cold shoulder to the brother who is in need and think only of our houses and lands and our mortgages. Why, I have even heard of Mennonites closing out their brethren in the church when they have a little chance to take care of it through a mortgage. I don't know how much more I should say on that point, but I feel pretty strongly about it. We need to recover some lost ground on this.

Brotherhood means mutual helpfulness and the minute we follow the worldly commercialized forms of financial aid and thrust people out upon that, we might as well stop talking about being brethren, because brotherhood isn't just a matter of our feelings; it is a matter of our whole life. Not long ago, I was talking to a member of the Church of the Brethren, a very devoted member of the church, but he was talking to me about this: he said, "Ours used to be a brotherhood too, but we are getting to be a church now. We are getting to be just like the other churches. Too many of us just come to the church to attend the worship and that is all it means to us. One of our young scholars has just written a thesis, a book, on the question, 'Is the Dunkard Church a church or a brotherhood?' " He said, we were once a brotherhood, but we are now a denomination. Have you ever thought about it—what is a church—just a collection of individuals who come and sit down beside each other in a pew and each one worships God by himself, just happens to be sitting beside his neighbor and goes home and forgets about his brother? Or have we something more here than just a collection of individuals if we have the church of Christ, as Mennonites understand it? We have more than that. We have a brotherhood.

This is based still further upon another concept that the church is the body of Christ. Now what is a body? A body is unity. Remember how the Apostle Paul said back there in I Corinthians, "Now how would it feel for the hand to say to the eye, I don't need you and for the eye to say to the hand, I don't need you, even one part to despise the other part?" He says, "You are all members of one body and you are all members, one with another." A body does not exist that isn't a living unity. You can take a body, of course, that is dead and cut it into pieces; it is no longer a body, then. The church of Christ is a body when there is one head, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose life flows through all the members and that all belong together that have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one holy spirit, one love for each other and they always say to each other, I belong to you, you belong to me; I share my life with you, you are a part of me. If you suffer, I suffer; I am grieved when you fail. What kind of a body do we have when someone falls, let us say, into a

serious sin and the rest of the members point the finger of scorn instead of grieving for that fallen member in love? What kind of a body do we have when we stand off and criticize each other and condemn each other—we haven't a real body, we haven't a real brotherhood. We believe that the church is the body of Christ of which we are all members and belong together in loving fellowship. That is real brotherhood.

The Moderator:

“We are confident that the talk by Brother Bender has helped us to a fuller and more complete idea of a church according to the teachings of the scripture. Our last number on the program is a sermon on the subject of ‘Maintaining the Faith’ by Brother John C. Wenger of Goshen, Indiana.”

MAINTAINING THE FAITH

Sermon by John C. Wenger

I am very happy to speak on this topic, as I think it has a real message for us. The wording of the topic suggests that it might be possible not to maintain the faith. It implies that there is a certain amount of obstacle, that there are certain dangers that confront us as a church, and that it is conceivable that we might be defeated in meeting these dangers.

I wish that I were an artist so that I might paint for you a picture of what it is going to mean to us as a church to maintain the faith. If I were using a text, I think it would be Revelations 7:14 which says that “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” That is the happy picture that the writer of the last book of the Bible gives of those who are victorious and have come out on the other shore with all the joy and happiness and bliss that overcoming brings to individuals and to the church as a whole.

Now this topic on overcoming and maintaining—overcoming our enemies and maintaining our faith—implies that we have something to maintain, also. And as you and I are going to be able, by God's grace, to maintain our faith, we have got to know what it is. Now, you can inherit your father's farm and you can inherit some of his money and you can inherit the color of his eyes and a lot of things of all kinds, but you can't inherit anybody's faith. You and I have got to achieve our own understanding of the word of God for ourselves. We can't have handed over to us a ready-made faith. We have got to work it out from the word of God. That means that if I want to help maintain the faith of the church,

I need to find out what the faith of the church has been. That is the reason I am so keenly interested in reading the tracts that our forefathers read, reading the accounts of their lives and their witness and their testimony and the price they paid for it, so that I can get something of that same vision that so filled them that they counted all earthly things as insignificant in comparison with it. And I, just like any other young person, as I get that vision I find that I am getting my feet on the solid rock of the word of God. And I think all of us who have had some understanding of the faith of our forefathers, as a scriptural faith, as a consistent Biblical faith, are eager to do all we can to help other people get that same faith. It is not a matter of teaching it to my son, to my grandson, and so on and having a swarming of a people. We need to have that same spiritual vigor and dynamics that our forefathers had so we carry this faith out. If we do that, we will maintain it.

But what does it mean to maintain this faith? What actually does the maintenance of the faith involve? There are a number of sub-divisions about this faith—aspects of the faith that we are interested in preserving in this twentieth century and until the Lord comes.

One of these might be called evangelicalism. That means to say we want to have a faith which is based on the word of God and we want, by God's grace, to maintain that faith. We want to understand what it means when we talk about the inspiration of the Bible. We need to know what it is to have a book which truly comes from God and to hold onto this faith. And I am not worried that we are going to break down on that. I think we have maintained a real faith in the word of God for over four hundred years and I believe we are going to continue doing that.

But it is well to know that the Devil has been very active along this line in the last one hundred years and he has found he can do more damage to the Church of Christ by getting inside with unbelieving leaders in some denominations than he ever could by persecution from the outside. And I am glad that we have a scriptural attitude toward the scripture; that we have the same attitude toward the Bible which the Bible presents of itself. Namely, that there is a qualitative difference between all other books and the Bible, because all other books have merely human writers, whereas the Bible was written by the inspiration of the Spirit of God.

Another aspect of our faith that we want to maintain might be called spirituality. We want to keep that vision before us of a church of Christians, each of whom is truly a spiritual person. We must not merely think of gaining masses and having numbers to pile up so that we can have a record of seven hundred members in our church, or whatever.

But we want to have every member of the church aware of his personal union with Christ by faith and live in the power of the spirit a life of victory over the world of the flesh and the Devil. And that is not the way of the world.

I think we all lament the current ways of sensuality and carnality that are manifesting themselves in what used to be some of the finest magazines in our country. There are beginning to appear in what are supposed to be some of our good magazines jokes with a low sensual content and attitudes expressed and language used that is not becoming to a born-again child of God.

I think this means also that if we are going to have a spiritual faith, spiritual members, that it means a clean life. Not only clean life in what is ordinarily thought of as morality but that we will want to keep our bodies clean from such filthy things as alcohol and tobacco. The Apostle Paul said that he wouldn't be brought under the power of anything. That is a Christian point of view. I don't want to be a slave with my mind, much more with my body, to anything. I want to be a free man in Christ. I find that if we don't acquire these habits, we don't have to break them; and if we have acquired them, we ought to break them by God's grace. We want to maintain that clear witness on the clean life. We want to maintain the simple life and that is a hard thing to do in the United States of America.

All the advertisements that you see, or a large proportion of them, are trying to sell comfort and ease to people. Why, you would think that a young couple couldn't be happy unless they had a deep-freeze unit, stuffed furniture and inner-spring mattresses and automatic heating control and twenty-nine other gadgets and things to put into the house. And that isn't true at all. I don't want to be understood as being against any one of those items; I think if we can afford them, that is all well and good. But we must not think that we can produce happiness with things. It can't be done and it is possible to be happy without any of those things. It is possible to live a life to the glory of God and deny ourselves of some of this ease that is being taught is so essential. We must maintain the emphasis on a simple life and that means we are not living for the pride of life and for luxury and extravagance and all that type of thing.

Maintaining the faith means also that we must hold on to the most distinctive doctrine, perhaps, in reference to the Christian life that we have had for four hundred years, and that is non-resistance. I think there is some muddy thinking on this question today and I hope that all our young people, especially, will think through carefully what war is—

what war means—what war is waged for. As I understand it, the purpose of war is to destroy all the life and property and morale of the enemy that is possible. As far as I can see, that is why war is waged. And listen: that is the purpose of every department of every phase of the armed forces. The Army does not create any departments for the sake of conscientious objectors. Let us not get the wrong idea. The purpose of every unit of every department of all the armed forces is to wage a successful war. That is what it is for. And I think seeing that should clear at once the atmosphere for all of our thinking if we believe that our purpose in the world as Christians is to be redemptive, is to save men's lives, rather than to destroy men's lives.

Now, what I am saying tonight on all these points, there is a vast amount of scripture that backs it up. Just take one verse. I am not going to take it out of the Sermon on the Mount here; we all know those; how we are to love our enemies and pray for those that spitefully use us and so on. But take Romans 12. That is painted so beautifully there. The Apostle Paul says, "Dearly Beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto the wrath of God, for it is written vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good." Have that redemptive attitude of being willing to suffer rather than to harm someone else.

During the First World War, my father was seated at a table and a certain woman was expressing her views on the subject and she said, "Well, maybe these CO's won't kill, but they will be put where they will be shot at." My father said quietly, "I would rather be shot at than to kill." The tone of the conversation changed.

If we are going to maintain the faith, it means that we have got to maintain non-conformity to the world. That is a Bible teaching, one that is very clear. I would like to try to put this in a setting like that which is found in the New Testament. Non-conformity to the world is not some kind of a dead, heavy, dragging doctrine. It is a happy thing in the New Testament. Perhaps we could illustrate it in a natural way by saying this: That we want to please those that we love. If a child really loves his mother, he will want to do and to be just what pleases the mother, and if we love God, we will want to try to please Him as perfectly as we can, by His grace. That is the basis of non-conformity in the scripture. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. And will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." And the Apostle

Paul goes on to say, "Seeing that we have these promises let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh." Why? So we can be sons and daughters of the Almighty. What a wonderful privilege to be a son of God, a daughter of God. That is the reason we are willing to pay the price, or isn't it a price; that is the reason we are willing to forsake the world for our happiness and for the glory of God. "Be ye holy, for I am holy. Be not conformed to this world. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world. If any man loveth the world, then love of the Father is not in him.

Before I say anything more about non-conformity, I want to remind us all of this—I am talking about a faith and not about a culture. Now, my father did some things different from his father. He doesn't dress like his father did, he doesn't drive the same kind of vehicle his father did, and so on. I do some things different from my father and I expect my children to do some things different, but I don't care; just so they have the same faith, that is what I am talking about. The modes of conveyance and transportation and communication and all those things change; the culture changes. But the faith can abide and it will abide until the Lord comes, because the Lord is the head of the church.

Can we maintain the faith? Yes, we can, by God's grace, because Jesus said "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." What does that mean, "gates"? In Biblical times, the city gates were the place where the people sat together and made their plans and so the gates of Hell mean all the schemes of the wicked underworld, so to speak; all the schemes of the Devil and his hosts. I think we ought to realize that the things that used to separate us as a people, that used to somewhat shelter us from the pressures of conformity to the temporary society about us—those shelters are somewhat gone. Brother Bender mentioned some of them. We used to be different from the rest of society by our language and by rural isolation and by dress and by a number of other things. Perhaps by poverty, somewhat.

Today those barriers are largely gone and we are under great pressure from society through the school system, through the radio, through the press to conform to the total American society around us with all of its ungodly and unchristian standards, and we must resist it unto the death or we will lose out as a denomination.

Now, I am not here to do any wailing; I believe, as I said, in the future of the church, but I think it is never the part of intelligence to belittle

the forces that we have to overcome. I think we ought to measure them and count the cost of following the Lord. The thing is this: there have been groups very similar to our church who have been largely overcome by the same forces that we as a denomination are facing. Now, I am not saying this in any sense to throw mud or clubs or sticks at any other denomination; that is not the point at all. But I do think that a wise person can learn from the mistakes of others and I do think that a wise brotherhood ought to note what has happened to some other groups.

Will you permit me one illustration in the kindest possible way that I know how to give it. A certain member of the Church of the Brethren, a scholarly man, selected what he thought was a typical community in the Church of the Brethren. He went into that community, lived there with the people, dressed in ordinary clothes so they wouldn't think he was a professor and interviewed them under all kinds of informal conditions. He would go to the cow stable and sit down on a stool and talk to the farmer while he was milking; go out perhaps and sit on a piece of machinery or a wagon with one of the boys and ask him a whole barrage of questions. This is what he did: he took all the boys between thirteen and twenty-four who had two Brethren parents and asked them all kinds of questions, not just the subjects I am going to mention.

He took down the answers. He had a system of numbers and so on and could write rapidly. Then he took all the men who were twenty-five years older than those boys. My mathematics isn't very good; I guess that would be 38-51, who had two Brethren parents and said, "What did you believe on these questions twenty-five years ago?" Now, I think any middle-aged man can easily tell you what he believed twenty-five years ago. Then, in the same community, he went to the grandfathers who were fifty years older than those boys and said, "What did you believe on these questions fifty years ago?" Then he was able to make a comparison between a generation fifty years ago, a generation twenty-five years ago and the present-day generation. Now, the Church of the Brethren was very staunch on the doctrines of non-resistance and of non-conformity to the world, in previous generations. I want to make that clear.

Do you know what this man found? He found that sixty percent of the boys would fight if this country was invaded—the present-day generation. In fact, as a result of his whole study, he concluded it was somewhat higher than that. I believe he estimated it to be nine out of ten and it has worked out in practice to be ten out of eleven.

Let me give you a few illustrations of worldly things that he tested out. One of them was the matter of girls bobbing their hair. The grand-

fathers, sixty-three percent, thought it was wrong fifty years ago. They probably didn't know much about it. The fathers, one hundred percent, thought it was wrong twenty-five years ago. Fifteen percent of the present generation thought it was wrong.

That is just one illustration. Take jewelry. Seventy-one percent of the grandfathers thought it was wrong, sixty-one percent of the fathers, four percent of the boys. Musical instruments in the church, sixty percent of the grandfathers, forty-eight percent of the sons and none of the grandsons. Card playing, seventy-five percent, eighty-one percent, thirty-eight percent. Going to the movies, there weren't any fifty years ago, of the fathers forty-seven percent, sons four percent. Regular family altar, eighty-two percent, twenty-five percent, twenty-two percent. Those are just some illustrations. It shows how successful the pressures of contemporary society can be in molding opinion and changing the opinions of a church—opinions which have been held strongly as being taught in the word of God.

So we will not do well to minimize the forces that outside society is bringing to bear against us on the things that we know now are Biblical because other groups have faced those same things and have somewhat given in to them.

When that man was through with his book, he called it "The Broken Cup." He borrowed that term from American Indian tradition that in the beginning the Creator had given to every tribe of people a beautiful clay cup—a beautiful cup out of which to drink. And this man said that a stronger hand than that of the Church of the Brethren has taken the arm of the church of the people and dashed the cup to the ground and it has broken into a thousand pieces. He said, maybe someone will give us a tin cup, but our cup is broken.

Now, I am not issuing any judgment on that denomination at all; that is not the point. I am mentioning this only as a warning to us not to minimize the pressures to conform to the society about us in all of its standards which are unscriptural.

Well, what are we going to emphasize as we teach the doctrine of separation from the world? I think, first of all, it is a total separation—attitude and spirit—an inner thing, first of all. A union with Christ, a breaking with sin—as was mentioned in connection with our baptismal vows. It means then, secondly, that all of our external appearance will conform to that inner heart which we have on the inside. Now, people are always talking about being able to put wolves in sheep's clothing and another thing that is true is that sheep don't wear wolves' clothing, either. I mean that we don't want anything on the outside of us—any-

thing of our external conduct or life or appearance or anything not to indicate what we have on the inside.

It means that our main emphasis is going to fall, as I said to begin with, on Christian piety and Christian service and not on being different just for the sake of being different. It means concretely, my friends, that we will want to maintain the stand of our church on such things as jewelry and prayer veiling and staying away from the theaters and a number of other things that should be mentioned.

Is it possible that our life could go out? Let me tell you what happened in Holland. The first hundred years of the Mennonite Church in Holland were years of persecution. 1500 gave their lives for the faith—a thousand men and five hundred women, at least, of our church. Then came a period of prosperity and by 1700, that is the second hundred years, the Mennonite Church in Holland had risen to a figure of 160,000, not counting children. 109 years later, it had fallen down to 27,000. What happened? The world got into the church. Young people became ashamed that they were Mennonites. Congregations died out, one a year on an average. Young men, when chosen for the ministry, refused to serve and the church lost its light in a very great way. And then when it was in a condition of spiritual weakness modernism came in—doctrinal modernism, so that the Dutch Mennonite Church was eventually practically unitarian. That is a tragedy.

That was what could happen. I don't believe it is going to happen to us. I think we are going to be true to the word of God. I think we are going to have a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and look to him and he will help us along.

What can we do as a church to help maintain the faith? I think the minister will continue to teach the word of God faithfully. They won't go off on any one tangent, anything even that is good, like prophesy or any other thing, will teach a balanced program from the word of God. Will visit and do personal work and exercise discipline in the spirit of brotherhood and of loyalty to the scripture, as our brother mentioned. As individuals, we will pray to do the will of God and seek to do His will, will try to Christianize all of our lives and try to adorn the doctrine of God, making Christian life winsome and attractive to other people.

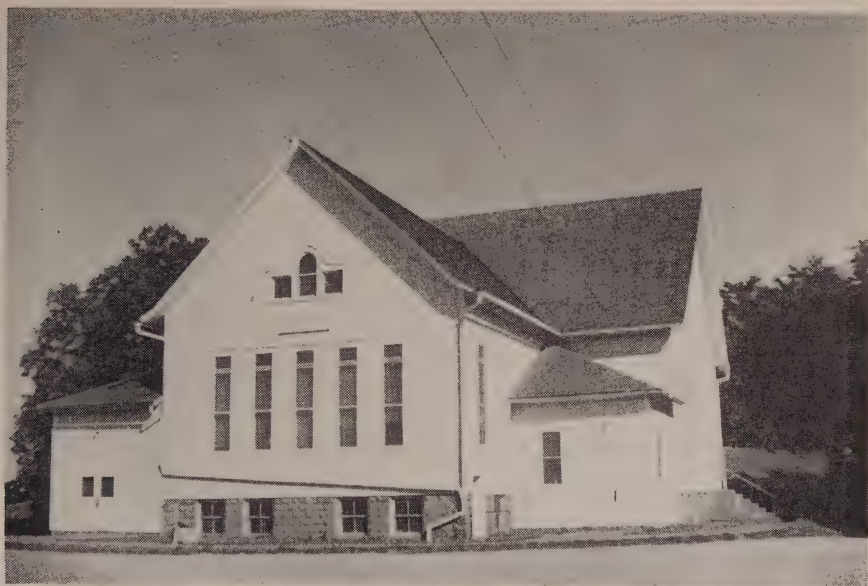
I know it is a common thing in some communities of our people to make fun of our forefathers, how they objected to telephones and objected to this and objected to that. But I tell you what would be a tragedy, though. If we would make fun of our forefathers and then succumb to the world that we have to face today. I believe that, if all of us parents will do our part in indoctrinating our children, that will go

a long way. I think if we just think this is the problem of the minister, we are doomed to failure. But if every home will take upon itself to indoctrinate our children in the word of God and rejoice to see them accept the principles of the word of God as understood by the church, the future of the church will be as bright as the promises of God.



Above: UPPER DEER CREEK. Old Order Amish church house 1890-1915.
Conservative Amish Mennonite 1915-
Elmer G. Swartzendruber, Bishop.

Below: LOWER DEER CREEK. Old Order Amish church house 1890-1913.
Mennonite 1913- Replaced in 1917.



Above: Fairview Conservative Amish Mennonite Church. Built 1936. E. G. Swartzendruber, Bishop.

Below: Lower Deer Creek Mennonite Church. Built 1917. J. Y. Swartzendruber, Bishop.



Above: First building of Iowa Mennonite School, 1945.

Below: Second building of Iowa Mennonite School, 1948.



Above: Third addition to Iowa Mennonite School, 1953.

Below: Beachy Amish Mennonite Church. Jonathan M. Miller, Bishop. Built 1952.



Above: West Union Mennonite Church. Built 1898. Replaced 1917. J. Y. Swartzendruber, Bishop.

Below: Wellman Mennonite Church. Built 1940. Max Yoder, Pastor.

PROGRAM

Centennial meeting commemorating the organization of the Amish and Mennonite Church in the Iowa-Johnson-Washington counties area in 1851.

EAST UNION CHURCH

November 22, 1951

Moderator—PAUL T. GUENGERICH, Parnell, Iowa

Chorister—GLEN SWARTZENDRUBER, Manson, Iowa

FORENOON SESSION

- 9:30 Song Service
- 9:45 Devotion AMOS GINGERICH, Parnell, Iowa
- 10:00 Address of Welcome D. J. FISHER, Kalona, Iowa
- 10:15 Early History of the Settlement
MELVIN GINGERICH, Goshen, Ind.
- 11:00 Organization and Early Development of the Church
ELMER G. SWARTZENDRUBER, Wellman, Iowa
- 11:45 Closing

AFTERNOON SESSION

- 1:15 Song Service
- 1:30 Devotion JOHN Y. SWARTZENDRUBER, Kalona, Iowa
- 1:45 Later Development and Growth
GUY HERSHBERGER, Goshen, Ind.
- 2:25 Evaluating Our Spiritual Heritage
SIMON GINGERICH, Wayland, Iowa
- 3:05 Open Discussion
- 3:45 Closing

EVENING SESSION

- 7:00 Song Service
- 7:15 Devotion ALBERT S. MILLER, Kalona, Iowa
- 7:25 Contending for the Faith
JOE C. GINGERICH, Detroit Lakes, Minn.
- 8:00 Sermon GEO. S. MILLER, Wellman, Iowa
- Missionary Offering taken.

PART II

CENTENNIAL PROGRAM OF THE FIRST ORGANIZATION

November 22, 1951

THE COMING OF THE AMISH MENNONITES TO IOWA

By Melvin Gingerich, Goshen, Indiana

A century ago, Iowa was a frontier state. In fact the American frontier line, that line beyond which two or less inhabitants lived in each square mile, in the federal census of the previous year, entered Iowa in its northeast corner, crossed that state in a southwesterly direction, and entered Missouri southwest of the present city of Centerville. The line passed diagonally through Iowa County from northeast to southwest. Since the first Amish church in Johnson County, organized in the spring of 1851, was located, therefore, perhaps twenty miles from the American frontier, our ancestors were pioneers and faced the usual hardships of pioneer life, as shall be explained later.

They, of course, were not the only ones who had been beckoned to this fair state by the glowing reports of its rich black soil. Quoting the January 1951 *Palimpsest*, "On the first of June, 1833, the Black Hawk Purchase was opened to settlement and the evergrowing stream of pioneers began to cross the Upper Mississippi. The first census of the Wisconsin Territory in 1836 found more than ten thousand people living in the two Iowa counties. Two years later the total had more than doubled, while by 1840 forty-three thousand people had settled in the Territory of Iowa. During the following decade the population increased to nearly two hundred thousand, and the fifties saw such a tide of immigrants sweep into the state and out on the prairies that the inhabitants more than trebled."

The historian is interested in more than dates; he wishes to know why events occurred. He is not only anxious to know, in this instance, when our forefathers arrived in Iowa and when they organized their first church but he also asks, "What impelled them to leave the East and to move to an area where they faced the privations of pioneer life?" "Why, in the first place, did they leave Europe?" "Why did they hap-

pen to be Amish instead of Lutheran, Reformed, or Catholic?" These broader questions can be answered in only a general way in this short paper. It is perhaps enough to say that the ancestors of the large majority of our Iowa Amish pioneers of 1851 were of Swiss background and very likely were Anabaptists or Mennonites as far back as the sixteenth century when thousands of common people in central Europe left the state churches and joined this protest movement which demanded far reaching reforms and the privilege of establishing voluntary groups fashioned on the pattern and teachings of the first century Christian church.

In 1851, the following family names were found in the Johnson County Amish community: Brenneman, Eash, Gingerich, Kempf, Miller, Roth, Swartzendruber, Schlabach, Stutzman and Wertz. John Horsch's list of Swiss Mennonite refugees in the Palatinate who later came to America includes Brenneman, Eash, Gingerich, Miller, Roth, Swartzendruber, and Schlabach, which is eight of the ten family names. The Gingerichs and Swartzendrubers were long associated with each other. They very likely at an early date left Switzerland for Alsace and later moved to the Palatinate. Their wanderings took them to Wittgenstein, thence to the Principality of Waldeck and from there to America, where they arrived in the first half of the nineteenth century, settling in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ohio, and moving on to Iowa from 1846 to 1851.

Note should be made of the fact that as early as 1840 four members of the Somerset County, Pennsylvania, Amish settlement had traveled through Henry, Washington, and Johnson counties in search of land for a future home. They were impressed by the hickory grove along Deer Creek in Johnson County, but reports concerning the ague kept them from settling here. On their way home, they passed through Elkhart County, Indiana, which led to a group of twenty-four moving there the following spring, thus establishing the first Amish settlement in that state. Five years later Daniel P. Guengerich and his half brother Joseph J. Swartzendruber explored the same area in Johnson County and selected their claims along Deer Creek.

In the following spring they moved to Iowa, thus establishing the first permanent Amish settlement in the state. The earlier communities of both Amish and Mennonites in Lee County were not permanent settlements. Among the families moving to Iowa in April 1846 was the Daniel P. Guengerich family. Daniel was born in Germany in 1813 and came to America in 1833, later settling in Fairfield County, Ohio, from where he moved to Iowa at the age of 33. With him were his family, including the sons Samuel D. and Jacob D., both of whom later became influential in

the life of the community, and whose descendants are in leadership positions in the Mennonite churches of this area.

The second family was that of William Wertz. He was born in Germany but came to Iowa from Fairfield County, Ohio, at the age of twenty-five. A blacksmith by trade, he had an opportunity to locate in West Liberty, Iowa, but because he had promised his bishop, David Zook of Ohio, that he would help build an Amish congregation, he went on with the Guengerich family and settled near them on the Wertz homestead, north of the Lower Deer Creek church. The Wertz's of the community are his descendants.

Coming with the Wertz and Guengerich family was Joseph J. Swartzendruber, who was not married. He, however, became discouraged and left the area in the same year, not returning until 1856. The third family to move into the community came from Knox County, Ohio, in the fall of 1846. This was the Peter Miller family. A brother to Mrs. D. P. Guengerich, Miller was born in Maryland and was forty-one years of age when he brought his family to Iowa. He is the ancestor of Dr. Enos Miller of Wellman.

For several years these three were the only Amish families in the Johnson-Washington county area. J. D. Guengerich writing in the June 1922 *Christian Monitor* described the hardship of these early years. He pictured their early home near the present town of Kalona to which they moved in 1849 in these words: "The door was made of split boards called clapboards. I do not remember that there was a single nail in the construction of the whole building. The roof was made of clapboards placed upon beams lengthwise of the building and held down by weight poles. There was one door on the south side of the building and a good sized fire-place on the east end, with a chimney built on the outside, not of brick or stone as you see them now, but built of split sticks of wood and mortar made out of clay. As time went on some improvements were made, such as putting a few more logs on the building making an upstairs and a better roof. But I well remember that our bed often was covered with snow in the winter time when we woke up in the morning.

"In this one room of this log cabin the first Amish meeting or public worship . . . was held in the fall of 1849; the congregation consisted of three families, Daniel P. Guengerich and wife, Wm. Wertz and wife and Peter B. Miller and wife and some six or eight children."

He went on to say that they might have moved back east had they not been too poor to do so. During those first years, their team of horses died and the father traded his pocket knife to have a patch of corn plowed. Later they procured a pair of yearling calves, which they broke to drive.

He wrote, "Beside that ox team I grew up nearly to manhood. . . . Well do I remember that upon one occasion my oldest brother and my sister and myself drove ten miles to meeting on Sunday morning and home again in the evening," using this ox team.

There were other troubles, too. A rumor that one hundred families of the "Dutch" were coming next year to enter out the land claims led to an armed vigilante committee surrounding the two cabins in which the Wertz's and Guengerich's lived and making threats as to what might happen if their squatter's claims were not respected. The two families explained that they had settled there in good faith and had never contemplated entering the lands which the squatters claimed. In time the leader of the vigilantes became a staunch friend of the Amish settlers.

Reference was made above to the fact that the Guengerich and Wertz families had agreed to move into the same community and there organize a church. With only three families in the area, this seemed impossible. In those days before Sunday schools, a group such as this seemed helpless in the work of organizing religious services without a minister in their midst. The first religious service conducted by an Amish minister in this community occurred in August 1846 when Jacob Swartzendruber, from Maryland, father of Joseph J. and step-father of D. P. Guengerich, came to Iowa to visit them and to examine the land. While he was in Iowa, the youngest Guengerich daughter died and Swartzendruber preached the funeral sermon.

It was not until the fall of 1849 that the three families were permitted to enjoy a regular religious service. In 1848 D. P. Guengerich and wife had visited the Amish settlement in Lee County. Perhaps as a result of this trip, two of the ministers from Lee County called on the Amish settlers in Johnson County in the fall of 1849. In a new hewed log house, 14 by 16 feet, on the D. P. Guengerich premises a mile northeast of the present town of Kalona the first regular religious services for the three Amish families and their children were held by two ministers from Lee County, Joseph Goldsmith and Christian Schwarzentruher. Samuel D. Guengerich in later years recorded "Goldsmith, Swartzendruber, and Farmwald, all ministers from Lee County, visited these families several times afterwards and preached for them." *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, III 246.

In 1850, three families from Fairfield County, Ohio, settled in the community. The first was the Daniel Schoettler family who came to Iowa in the spring of that year. He was born in Germany in 1810 and settled in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, in 1833. Later he lived in Allegheny County, Maryland, and in Butler County and Fairfield County, Ohio,

before coming to Iowa. Eight children accompanied them to this state. They settled on a farm on Deer Creek in Washington Township. His son-in-law, Emanuel Hershberger, later lived here, followed by Emanuel's son Joseph, who is present with us today. Many descendants of Daniel Schoettler have been and are now prominent in the Mennonite churches of this community. Shettlers, Hershbergers, Swartzendruber, Gingerichs, Fishers, and Millers are among them.

In the autumn of 1850 the fifth and sixth families arrived in the community, also coming from Fairfield County, Ohio. One of these was the Benedict Miller family, whose descendants have been prominent in the Johnson County community throughout the past century. Those of the speaker's generation remember well Dan, Jake, John, and Sam Miller, four of the sons of Benedict. He was born in Maryland in 1815. He too bought land on Deer Creek, including the farm now occupied by the Jacob Erb family, Mrs. Erb being a great granddaughter of Benedict.

The other family was that of John Kempf who settled near what is now Frytown and a few years later in Sharon Township. Kempf was born in Germany in 1795 and was therefore considerably older than the rest of the Iowa settlers when he arrived there in 1850. He had moved to Ohio from Maryland with his family, evidently between 1844 and 1846. The 1851 Johnson County census declared that the number of souls in his household was ten. Among his descendants are Guy F. Hershberger, who appears on the program this afternoon, as well as Schlabaachs, Gingerichs, Benders, Shettlers, and Kempfs.

It was in the spring of 1851, however, that the first large groups of Amish settlers arrived in the community. On May 4, Jacob Swartzendruber and wife and his son Frederick and wife with their families arrived at the home of Jacob's stepson Daniel P. Guengerich. Jacob was born in 1800 in Germany and there ordained a preacher in the Amish church, perhaps in 1826. Arriving in America in 1833, he lived for many years in Maryland before coming to Iowa. His son Frederick, born in Germany, had come to America with his father in 1833.

The year 1851 was perhaps the wettest in the history of the state, as a rainfall of seventy-five inches is reported for that year. From the last of April until the middle of July there was almost incessant rain. When the Swartzendruber arrived in Johnson County on May 3, 1851, they learned that it had been raining steadily for two weeks and that the roads were deep with mud, which the Easterners soon discovered was as sticky as "shoemaker's wax." The experiences with the Iowa mud between Muscatine and the Kalona area made a lasting impression upon Mrs. Frederick Swartzendruber, judging by the vivid description given

by her son J. F. Swartzendruber in an article entitled "Mother's Story" which appeared in the August 1922 *Christian Monitor*. This part of the journey was in marked contrast to their steamboat trip from Brownsville, Pennsylvania, to Muscatine, Iowa.

The day after the arrival of the Swartzendrubers in Iowa, four additional Amish families reached the community from Fairfield County, Ohio, having traveled overland with horses and wagons. These were preacher John Gingerich and family, his two sons Daniel J. and Christian and their families and his son-in-law Henry Stutzman and wife. John Gingerich was born in Germany in 1791 and came to America in 1835. He was ordained to the ministry previous to 1833, for in that year he signed a church letter for Jacob Swartzendruber's membership transfer to an American church. His two sons were also born in Germany, Christian in 1817 and Daniel J. in 1818, and came to America with their father in 1835. Stutzman was born in 1826 but the writer has been unable to learn his birthplace. The 1856 census record is not legible on this point.

With the coming of these families, among whom were two preachers, the organization of a congregation was now possible. S. D. Guengerich reported, "In the spring of 1851 the Amish Mennonite church was permanently organized with about 27 members," but he does not state who had charge of the meeting. J. D. Guengerich (*Christian Monitor*, June 1922) stated that it was organized by Jacob Swartzendruber and John P. Gingerich. According to Goldsmith family tradition, Joseph Goldsmith organized the congregation at that time, which is stated to be the case by the writer in his *Mennonites in Iowa*, although neither Samuel or Jacob Guengerich gave Goldsmith credit for it. The fact that Samuel Glengerich specifically mentioned Goldsmith's visit in 1849 and again called attention to the fact that the first communion service for the congregation was held in the home of Daniel J. Gingerich in the spring of 1852, with Bishop Joseph Goldsmith officiating, at which time Frederick Swartzendruber was ordained deacon, and that he mentioned Goldsmith's visit in 1853 when Jacob Swartzendruber was ordained bishop leads one to wonder why he might have overlooked a visit by Goldsmith in 1851. It is hardly conceivable, however, that this group would have defied the well established tradition of organizing a congregation only with the help of a bishop. It has been said that both S. D. and J. D. Guengerich admitted in their later years that Goldsmith very likely was present at this organizational meeting.

Who then were the twenty-seven charter members. Very likely the names given in the handwriting of S. D. Guengerich, which copy is in

the files of E. G. Swartzendruber, are the ones, which includes twenty-seven names, as follows:

Daniel P. Guengerich and wife.....	2
William Wertz and wife.....	2
Peter B. Miller and wife.....	2
Daniel Schoettler and wife.....	2
Benedict Miller and wife.....	2
John Kempf and wife and daughter Elizabeth.....	3
Jacob Swartzendruber and wife and son George.....	3
Frederick Swartzendruber and wife.....	2
John P. Guengerich and wife and daughter Elizabeth..	3
Christian J. Gingerich and wife.....	2
Daniel J. Gingerich and wife.....	2
Henry Stutzman and wife.....	2

It should be noted that in the autumn of the same year, 1851, the following families, all from Holmes County, Ohio, joined the settlement: Preacher Peter Brenneman, Isaac Eash, John Roth, John Schlabach, and Jacob P. Guengerich.

Another point that needs to be clarified concerns the degree of close family relationships in this pioneer settlement, particularly the relationship of the Gingerich and Swartzendruber families. Peter Guengerich, who lived and died in the Principality of Waldeck, Germany, had two sons by his first wife, one of whom was Preacher John Gingerich, the Iowa immigrant of 1851. After the death of his first wife, he married again and to this union were born two sons, Daniel P. and Jacob P. Guengerich, the Iowa immigrants of 1845 and 1851 respectively. Daniel P., the father of Samuel D., was therefore a half-brother of Preacher John Gingerich, which made John's sons Christian, Daniel, and Joseph first cousins of Samuel D. and Jacob D. Guengerich. After the death of Peter Guengerich, his widow, who had been his second wife, married Jacob Swartzendruber, the Iowa immigrant of 1851, who was the father of Joseph J., Frederick, Christian, and George. These four Swartzendruber boys were therefore half brothers to Daniel P. and Jacob P. Guengerich but no relation to John P. Gingerich, the immigrant minister of 1851. It should also be noted that Mrs. William Wertz and Mrs. Benedict Miller were daughters of Preacher John P. Gingerich. The Swartzendruber family was especially influential in the history of the pioneer Amish church in this section of Iowa, having produced more ministers than any other Iowa Amish Mennonite family, as will be shown by another speaker on this program. Another prominent group in the early Johnson County, Iowa, Amish community was the Miller family. Chil-

dren of Benedict Miller (1781-1837), Springs, Pennsylvania, the following brothers and sisters were among the twenty-seven charter members: Peter B., Salome (Mrs. John Kempf), Benedict B., and Susanna (Mrs. D. P. Guengerich).

The question still remains as to why our ancestors left Europe and risked the long and difficult ocean voyage to come to America. Very likely there were several important reasons. That the economic opportunities of America were challenging to our European forefathers there can be no question. But one of the chief causes, however, was the desire to escape the militarism of Europe. When their families reached the draft age, they migrated to America where their sons would not be forced into a system that violated their consciences. The writer's great-grandfather John P. Guengerich, for instance, came to America in 1835, just a few weeks before the oldest son reached his eighteenth birthday. Another one of the writer's great-grandfathers, John Reber, fled from France shortly before he reached the draft age and finally settled in Iowa in the early years of the settlement after having been ordained to the ministry in Elkhart County, Indiana. Many of the Amish and Mennonites who came to America after the Napoleonic wars which ended in 1815 were motivated by this same desire of escaping from the growing militarism of Europe. On this Thanksgiving day, we owe deep gratitude to God and our country that the conscience of those who cannot become a part of a military machine is respected. If, however, this condition should end, how many of us would be willing to make sacrifices similar to those made by our ancestors by moving to a frontier country such as Paraguay or Uruguay in order to preserve our religious faith?

Why did our forefathers leave the eastern states where they had lived for a period of years? Again there are several reasons. In some instances, economic competition had become so keen that it was difficult for young families to make a living there and the cheap rich soil of Iowa offered a solution to the economic problem. On the other hand, some were motivated by a desire to establish a new church in the west where higher ideals could be established and maintained than were being practiced in the eastern churches. Our great-great grandfather Jacob Swartzendruber gave as his chief reason for coming to Iowa this desire to help build a church where higher moral and social standards prevailed than in the eastern Amish churches.

The economic and religious aspects of life must always be closely related. Without a sound economic foundation a community will die and its spiritual idealism will ultimately be lost in a disintegrating community. One of the sad aspects of Mennonite life in America is the hun-

dreds of failures in community building. Our forefathers built a solid foundation in those early years as is shown in the growth and success of their community.

ORGANIZATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENTS OF THE CHURCH

By Elmer G. Swartzendruber, Wellman, Iowa

“For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name.” *Psa. 61: 5.* “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.” *Psa. 16: 6.*

The opportunity for those of us who are present here today is one that will not return again. On August 9, 1946, another centennial meeting commemorating the settlement of Amish Mennonite people of the Iowa-Johnson-Washington counties area in 1846 was held here at East Union, while today we are observing, not the beginning of this settlement, but we are thinking of the time five years later when there came to fruition that which from the beginning probably was the predominating line of thinking in the mind of those, our ancestors, who came here; the actual organization of a corporate church body.

A review of the history of those who came here in those first years has just been given by Bro. Gingerich, which as a reminder should truly have a humbling effect on all of us today.

Our ancestors were a people who recognized the need and value of an organized church life as being of paramount importance. It is true that prior to this time occasional preaching services were held by ministers coming from Lee County, but to the people here this was not the ideal goal to which they looked.

Here then they began an organized effort to worship the Lord, and down through these hundred years many are those who have come and gone, making each one their own contribution as only they could do.

Today the challenge is ours, as was that of Moses to Israel, the covenant then was, “with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.” *Deut. 5:3.*

The organization of this first church took place only seventeen years after the first church building of any sort was erected in the state; the one under construction in Dubuque in July 1834.

It is a fact that many of the Amish and Mennonite communities have originated because of their conception of and high regard for the church, and this one here is no exception to that rule. This church, this fellowship, this faith, this conviction has held them together always as nothing else could have done. In fact it is often hard for us to realize that there

was a time when this was not the case, which however is true. Quite a contrast exists between this idea of the church and that which prevailed four or five hundred years ago when the state church included practically everyone, and for one to get out of that situation was not an easy matter, in fact to do so meant going to the court house and filing a petition and registering.

In the church of one hundred years ago there existed a mutual sharing and helping each other, and a standing together that today is often not too well understood and practiced among us. Some changes have taken place that undoubtedly have been well, but some others there are which we would do well to recapture again today.

At our centennial meeting five years ago Brother H. S. Bender in speaking on the subject, "The Mennonite Conception of the Church," said, "There is danger of losing the conception of the true spirit of brotherhood and becoming only a collection of individuals who come and sit down beside each other in a pew, and each worship God by himself, going home and forgetting his brother." But not so with those of our forefathers who came here over a hundred years ago. They felt a real need of each other, and not only that but also had a real desire to help each other as brothers and sisters in the faith as well as others. It cannot be denied that there are many happenings of those earlier years that remained unrecorded, which we now would desire to know, and yet there are probably few of us who realize how blest we have been to have had among those first settlers, men like Daniel P. Guengerich, Jacob Swartzendruber, Abner Yoder, Jacob F. Swartzendruber, and Samuel D. Guengerich, who sensed the value, and had the urge, to record the many important details of those pioneer days which today are the very foundation of most of our historical data of the community.

It has been said, and probably rightly so, that there may not be another Mennonite settlement in the United States which is a hundred years old or older that has a more complete record of the major happenings, achievements, and influences than has this one in which we live.

The most prolific writer of those named above was S. D. Guengerich. He was born in 1836, was 9 years old when he came with his parents to Iowa in the spring of 1846. He probably inherited from his father Daniel P. Guengerich a love to write. Many of the records he made from his own experiences and others were made early enough in life from the reports of others so that on the whole they are considered quite accurate and authoritative.

Not only was S. D. Guengerich interested in keeping records of happenings within the community but possibly no one, in those formative

years of the development of a Christian community surpassed, or even equalled him in envisioning far in advance the particular needs in the efforts of that day upon which would hinge so largely the results in the years to come. Especially was he a man who saw the value of teaching the youth of the church to read and to write, and together with this to lay the true foundation for Christian service. He not only saw this need but he did something about it as well; he prepared himself to teach school by self-discipline and hard labor, and by attending Millersville State normal school for a while. A copy of an article of agreement made between him and J. P. Miller, a sub-director of sub-district No. 3 of Sharon Township, indicates that beginning November 26, 1860, he was to teach a period of sixteen weeks, receiving for those services the sum of twenty dollars per month. In this agreement he promises "faithfully and impartially govern and instruct the children and youth who may attend the same." Also included therein he agrees, "to refrain from every species of profanity and improper conduct while in their presence" and "to institute no cruel or unusual mode of punishment in the administration of discipline," and that he will have a real concern to maintain certain high moral standards.

With regard to spiritual needs, he wrote in 1905 as follows: "It seems to the writer that we are living in an age that a spiritual revival and reformation should be wrought through the churches, by the work of the Holy Spirit, through a man, or men, whom God may choose and endow for that purpose."

These several principles and standards are given because they are indicative, we believe, of the regard held for the higher values of life, and their direct bearing on the welfare of the church.

It is mainly from the records of S. D. Guengerich that most of the historical facts of those first years are derived. Then, too, recognition should be given to the very valuable contribution which was made in 1939 by the concern and research of Brother Melvin Gingerich in preparation for, and publishing of, his book, "The Mennonites in Iowa." A number of other valuable records have also been gathered together, and are in the files of the writer of this article.

With the coming to Iowa of the two families in the spring of 1846, one more in the fall of that year, one more in the spring of 1850 and two more that fall, and six more in the spring of 1851 we now have a total of twelve families living here at the time of the organization of the church one hundred years ago. In these twelve families there were probably three children who were old enough to have been members of the church, and this would make up the probable number of 27 present at

that first communion service. The above number can not, however, at this time be verified to be entirely authentic but they are nevertheless given as they are supposed to have been.¹

Supposedly² George, 20-year-old son of Jacob Swartzendrubers, and Elizabeth, 20-year-old daughter of John Gingerichs, and Elizabeth, 19-year-old daughter of John Kempfs, were the three additional members of the church which with the 12 families made up the total of 27 members at that day when the church was organized. There is a question, unanswered as yet, whether or not the two men who had also entered land claims in February and April of 1851 were members of the church and if they were whether they also may have been among the number present. These two were John Goldsmith who took up 80 acres on the Deer Creek across the road from the Dan Graber home and Peter Bechler who entered 40 acres across the road west from where Paul Shetler now lives. (Any one knowing anything about either of these two names will please take note.) For the purpose of clarification we state here that another name often associated with those who first entered claims with the Government is that of Joseph Swartzendruber who later became an active Bishop here. He was here in 1845 with his half-brother Daniel P. Guengerich, and again returned with him and William Wertz in 1846 when Wertz and Guengerich came with their families for a permanent settlement, but during that year the bilious fever, or "ague" as it was then called, was so severe that Joseph returned to Maryland again, where he soon married, promising his mother-in-law (before marriage) not to leave until after her death which promise he kept. In 1856 he moved with his family to Iowa for a permanent home. The land which he entered in 1846, or some of it at least has remained in this family ever since. This makes a part of three farms in the community rate as over a hundred years in the same family line: the Wertz entry, where Millers sisters now live, the Swartzendruber entry, a part of the farms of Joel Schlabaugh and Emanuel Swartzendruber, and the Schoettler entry, a part of the farm owned by the writer of this article, he being a great-grandson of Daniel Schoettler.

Coming back now again to the names of those probably present at that first service when the church was organized we find very close family ties in blood relationship among them, as may be seen from the following: Peter B. Miller, Benedict B. Miller, Mrs. John Kempf and Mrs. Daniel P. Guengerich were brothers and sisters. John P. Guengerichs were the parents of Daniel J. and Christian J. Guengerich and of Mrs. Wertz,

¹ See page 52.

² Christian purchased the 80 acres of original entry from his brother, Joseph Swartzendruber, in fall of 1850 (see deed record in safe).

Mrs. Stutzman, and of Mrs. Benedict B. Miller. Mrs. Christian Guengerich was a sister to Henry Stutzman. John P. Guengerich was an older half-brother to Daniel P. Guengerich, while Daniel in turn was a half-brother to Frederick, Christian and George Swartzendruber. Jacob Swartzendruber was the father of George Swartzendruber, and the step-father of Daniel P. Guengerich.

During the years of this settlement prior to this time there had already been a group of Amish in Lee County, Iowa, and from there several times Bishop Christian Schwartzendruber and Bishop Joseph Goldsmith had come and preached for the small group in this region. Now in 1851 among the immigrants there were two ministers, viz.: Jacob Schwartzendruber and John P. Guengerich who were both ordained in Germany, and so now again they called for help from the Lee County church whereupon the Elders Schwartzendruber and Goldsmith came and organized them into a church body.³ As was at times customary then and still is in some churches today communion was not held at this time, but the next spring (1852) Goldsmith again came and held communion and at this time the first ordination took place in the calling of Frederick Schwartzendruber to the office of deacon. The next year, 1853, Jacob Schwartzendruber was called to the office of Bishop and so now using a common expression then, "the bench was complete." This communion service was held at the home of Daniel J. Guengerich which was located a mile or so northeast of Kalona.

Of the bishop work of Jacob Schwartzendruber, S. D. Guengerich later wrote, "he presided over the church faithfully with zeal, up to the time of his death, in 1868." For eleven years after the church was organized peace and unity seemed to reign but then some friction developed. During that time several additions to the ministry took place so that now there were 8 ordained men here: Bishops Jacob Schwartzendruber and Joseph Keim, Ministers Joseph Swartzendruber, Benj. Schrock, John Gingerich and Peter Brenneman, and Deacons Frederick Schwartzendruber and John Mishler. Keim, however, served only as assistant bishop to Schwartzendruber and that only from 1858 to 1864 when he could no longer agree with the methods of church operation, and so he moved to Illinois. Mishler, who as a deacon moved in in 1859 also felt in sympathy with Keim's views and in 1868 moved to Polk County, Iowa.

During this first decade many other families moved in from many different congregations, bringing with them varying opinions on church government, and this created an atmosphere which called for wise counsel and guidance, and even then failed far from having comparative

³ See page 51 for further explanation.

smooth sailing. Apparently the rifts existing in 1862 were somewhat minor ones to those developing in the years 1865 and again in 1868.⁴ In 1865, in the east district, 66 communed and 60 did not, while in the west district 38 communed and 42 did not, making a total of 104 communing and 102 who did not. In 1868 in the west district 89 communed and 9 did not, and in the east district 65 did and 57 did not, making a total of 154 that took communion and 66 who did not. Evidently the total membership in these years did not quite hold its own.

These church difficulties no doubt had a serious effect on the physical health of Bishop Schwartzendruber who died in 1868. In a letter he wrote in 1863⁵ he made mention of the fact that his memory is not so good, and the many church troubles often disturb his thoughts so that frequently he fails to do that which is entirely right, also saying he feels he is not worthy to lead the church, and only by the grace and mercy of God can he hope to go forward.

Again in a letter⁶ of 1866 he says in a closing postscript, "It appears that my few remaining days must be lived with cross and sorrow, and if I were not in the ministry I could have peace with nearly all men, as Paul also says." Some of the real concern that Bishop Schwartzendruber⁷ had for the welfare of the church is expressed in a copy of a writing of six typewritten sheets which he wrote up in 1860, wherein are recorded some of the difficult physical conditions on the part of both himself and his wife, and yet how amidst this all they still considered their duties toward the church of greater importance than their own conveniences.

In the handwriting⁸ of Daniel P. Guengerich, who was the first settler here, he says: "In 1846 I finished fencing in 10 acres, 8 acres prairie was then broken up, but the best was still missing, we still had no church, not until 1851 when more families arrived, among whom were my dear mother and step-father Jacob Schwartzendruber. He then was chosen Bishop, and so with the blessings of God the church grew." In Brother Gingerich's book, "The Mennonites in Iowa" (p. 127), in telling of some of the characteristics of Bishop Schwartzendruber, and his letters written to their conference or "diener versammlung," has this to say, "The clear, logical letters he wrote to the conference and to fellow-preachers indicate that he was better educated than the average Amish

⁴ Pages 222-227, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

⁵ Page 183, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

⁶ Page 195, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

⁷ Page 2, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

⁸ Page 276, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

preacher of his day. The fact that practically all of his descendants are members of the Mennonite or Amish Mennonite churches and that among his descendants there have been many bishops, preachers, and deacons shows that he left a valuable heritage to his children.” (There are 12 Bishops, 12 Ministers, 2 Deacons.⁹) In 1856 Joseph Swartzendruber, a son of Jacob, again returned to Iowa, having been ordained as a deacon while yet in Maryland, and here he was ordained to the ministry in 1860. In 1861 Jacob Marner, a minister, moved here from Pennsylvania, and about this same time another minister, Benjamin Schrock, also came from Pennsylvania.

During these years, Bishop Keim having moved out, Schwartzendruber was actively in charge of the entire church group in the area until 1866 when Bishop Abner Yoder moved in from Pennsylvania. Several years prior to this, in 1862, the services were divided into what was classed the “Deer Creek” and the “Sharon” districts, and after Yoder’s arrival he was largely responsible for the work in the Sharon area and Schwartzendruber (by now the “ch” was dropped) in the Deer Creek area. After the death of Jacob in 1868 his son Joseph was ordained Bishop in 1869, and then he and Yoder were contemporary bishops here. Yoder was also a very prolific writer and some very valuable records written by him are also in my possession. Among the writings of Yoder and with the obituary¹⁰ of Joseph Swartzendruber was the following poem:

Ihr wehrte Freunde spart die Tränen
 Die Ihr an meinen Grabe weint
 Was hilft each doch das viele stöhnen,
 Den Gott hats gut mit mir gemeint,
 Ach nimmt doch dieses trostwort an,
 Was Gott thut das ist wohl gethan.
 Seyd alle voll verträglichkeit
 Ihr Schwestern und Ihr Brüder
 Die Eintracht baut ein Haus,
 Die zwietracht reizt es nieder.

In a free translation it might be somewhat like this:

My dear friends spare the tears,
 Which at my grave you shed,
 What benefit is there in much groaning,
 For with me God has meant it well,

⁹ Jacob Swartzendruber, Joseph Swartzendruber, Frederick Swartzendruber, Noah D. Yoder, Solomon Swartzendruber, Jacob F. Swartzendruber, Fred Gingerich, Simon Gingerich, Sanford Yoder, Joseph Reber, Elmer Swartzendruber, Alva Swartzendruber, Jacob J. Swartzendruber, Amos Gingerich, Joseph Gingerich, Wm. Brenneman, Fred Gingerich, Leroy Gingerich, Simon Gingerich, A. Lloyd Swartzendruber, Morris Swartzendruber, Paul T. Guengerich, Walter Slabach, Don Reber, Elias Swartzendruber, George Reber.

¹⁰ Page 280, Loose Leaf No. 1, EGS file.

But do accept this word of comfort,
What God does is all well done,
Be forbearing with each other
Ye brethren and ye sisters,
In harmony a house is built,
But dissension breaks it down.

Quoting a later historian,¹¹ "To say that our first Amish settlers were 'home makers' is but to touch on one of those outstanding characteristics that belonged to them. The ventures they made were not always the most promising. The trials they had, and the hardships they endured, were often almost beyond endurance. In fact there were those who of a weaker frame did not carry through, and the problems of those who did, we can scarcely guess. When we attempt to analyze the feelings and understandings of these early migrants we begin to realize better the momentous Christian fortitude that was theirs."

This then is our heritage, and we should and do thank God for it. However, we can not inherit anyone's faith, we must achieve our understanding of the Word of God for ourselves, and for this we must give an account to Him—it can not be a ready made faith handed down to us by someone else.

¹¹ "EGS Writings," EGS file.

THE LATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOHNSON COUNTY CHURCHES

Guy F. Hershberger

My task is a rather large one. Whereas the first two addresses were devoted to the first fifteen years of the history of the Johnson County churches, this is supposed to cover the remaining eighty-five years. It will therefore be necessary for me simply to give a brief outline sketch of the later period, and then to select a few outstanding points on which to make some remarks by way of interpretation.

When the Amish Mennonite Church in Johnson County was first organized in 1851 there was only one congregation, with Jacob Swartzendruber and John Gingerich as ministers. In 1853 Swartzendruber was ordained bishop. In 1862 the congregation was divided into two districts, Deer Creek and Sharon, which arrangement continued until 1877. In 1865 Frederick Swartzendruber was ordained bishop in the Sharon district, and in 1866 Bishop Abner Yoder from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, moved into the Sharon district and served there also. Jacob Swartzendruber continued to serve in the Deer Creek district until his death in 1868. In 1869 his son Joseph J. Swartzendruber was ordained bishop to fill this vacancy. In 1877 each district was again divided into two parts, making four districts in all. Frederick Swartzendruber now served as bishop of the South Sharon district, and Abner Yoder in North Sharon. In South Sharon, Swartzendruber was succeeded by Christian J. Miller in 1886, and then by Noah Yoder in 1910. In North Sharon Peter Kinsinger succeeded Abner Yoder as bishop in 1884 and continued until 1923. Joseph J. Swartzendruber died in 1877.

From 1877 to 1883 the two Deer Creek districts were under the care of the bishops of the Sharon districts. In 1883 William K. Miller was ordained bishop for Upper Deer Creek, and in 1887 Jacob F. Swartzendruber for Lower Deer Creek. Swartzendruber and Miller continued as bishops of the Deer Creek congregations until the reorganizations took place; in 1913 in the case of Lower Deer Creek, and in 1915 in Upper Deer Creek. In 1914 some families from the Sharon congregations moved away to form a new settlement in Buchanan County, Iowa. William K. Miller now joined this group, whereas Jacob F. Swartzendruber trans-

ferred his membership to South Sharon. This brings the general outline of the story down to about 1915, which seems to be a natural dividing point in Iowa Mennonite history. It should be added, however, that since 1915 the Sharon districts have been further divided, or new ones added, so that in 1951 there were six districts or congregations, all of which retained their status as Old Order Amish churches, and each having its own bishop. The names of the six Amish bishops in 1951 were as follows: Truman Miller, Moses W. Yoder, Ira A. Nissley, William S. Yoder, Edwin Hershberger, and Enos C. Swartzendruber. These congregations represent an extension of the original Sharon churches, chiefly eastward and southward.

The history of the East Union and West Union congregations, together with that at Wellman, is another story. About 1879 some members of the Sharon churches transferred their membership to the Sugar Creek congregation in Henry County. Later on Christian Wery, a minister from Indiana, moved to the Sharon district and began to worship with this group. In 1885 he was ordained bishop by Joseph Buercky of Illinois, and a new congregation was organized. In 1889 this congregation erected the first Amish Mennonite meeting house in Johnson County. It was located one mile west of the Prairie Dale schoolhouse and was called the Union church, because its membership was drawn from each of the other four congregations, Upper and Lower Deer Creek, and North and South Sharon. In 1889 Jacob J. Swartzendruber, a son of Joseph J. Swartzendruber, was ordained to the ministry in the Union church. In 1894 he moved away, joining the new settlement in Wright County, Iowa. In 1897 the Union congregation was divided, the two congregations now being known as East Union and West Union. Later the original Union meeting house was moved to the site of the present East Union church. We are told that in 1898 the number of persons taking communion at East Union was 85. It is interesting to note that for some time West Union was larger than East Union. In 1905, according to the *Mennonite Yearbook*, the figure was 130 for East Union, and 160 for West Union. For some years Christian Wery served as bishop of both congregations. In 1906 A. I. Yoder was ordained bishop to assist Wery in both congregations. Soon afterwards he moved away, however. Then in 1909 Jacob K. Yoder was ordained bishop for West Union, and in 1913 S. C. Yoder was ordained to this office at East Union. Christian Wery died in 1914. J. K. Yoder's successor as bishop at West Union was Abner G. Yoder, while D. J. Fisher succeeded S. C. Yoder at East Union. The Wellman church was organized in 1935, its membership representing in part an extension of the West Union church. At the beginning Abner G. Yoder

of the West Union church was bishop in charge. Following his death this responsibility was assigned to Perry J. Blosser of the South English congregation.

The reorganization of the Lower and Upper Deer Creek congregations occurred just before the year 1915, which was suggested above as a convenient dividing point in Iowa Mennonite history. It is an interesting fact that both of these congregations had erected meeting houses as early as 1890, just one year after the erection of the Union meeting house. Although this was very unusual for Amish churches of that time, both Deer Creek congregations continued working with the Sharon churches until 1913 and 1915. In the former year Lower Deer Creek separated from the Old Order, although the old meeting house was retained. For several years after the withdrawal of J. F. Swartzendruber, Andrew Schrock of Illinois served as bishop of the congregation, after which John Y. Swartzendruber was ordained to this office in 1919. About this time the Lower Deer Creek congregation also became a member of the Western A. M. conference. In 1914 bishop William K. Miller withdrew from the Upper Deer Creek church and transferred his membership to Buchanan County. The congregation soon joined the Conservative A. M. conference. In 1919 Gideon A. Yoder became the new bishop, and he was succeeded by Elmer Swartzendruber in 1931. In 1936 the Fairview meeting house was erected in Sharon township as a part of the Upper Deer Creek congregation. Even more recently a new congregation, by a group separating from the Old Order churches, erected a meeting house in 1952. This congregation may perhaps be described as a Conservative A. M. congregation, independent of conference.

Following this outline historical sketch perhaps the most worthwhile thing which I can do is to suggest a few ideas which have occurred to me as to the place of the Iowa churches in the general framework of historic Mennonitism, and of the Mennonites and Amish of America. After all, we are interested in more than Johnson County. How do we fit into the general scheme of things? I am convinced that the Mennonite and Amish churches have a mission in the world today. One Sunday evening a good many years ago, after the evening service, Joe C. Brenneman and I were in conversation in the back part of the East Union church. I am not certain, but it may have been in the old brick building, some time before 1922. I do not remember how the conversation began, but I recall Brother Brenneman quoting the words of the prophet to Queen Esther: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?", and asking me whether these words do not apply to the Mennonite church in our own time. While we do not wish to think too highly of our congre-

gations, or of our denomination, I believe that Joe C. Brenneman had a good reason for asking this question. We have been created for a purpose and I believe that God has a place for our denomination in His work in this world. It is our responsibility to understand what that purpose is.

Now let us see how the Johnson County churches fit into the general picture of Mennonitism. First of all, let us remember that the Mennonite Church had its beginning in 1525 in Switzerland; and that the Iowa Mennonites are almost entirely of Swiss origin. Then in 1693 in Switzerland occurred the division between the Amish and the Mennonites; and in Iowa we have Mennonites and Amish of Swiss origin, although practically all of the Johnson County Mennonites today are of Amish ancestry. In the eighteenth century a large number of Amish and Mennonites came to America and settled in Pennsylvania. Later some of them moved westward, to Lancaster and Somerset Counties, then to Holmes County, Ohio, LaGrange County, Indiana, and some of them on to Iowa. That was the early immigration of 1700 to 1775. Then between 1800 and 1850 there was a later immigration of Amish who came from Alsace. They are commonly referred to as the Alsatian Amish. They settled primarily in Wayne and Fulton counties in Ohio, in central Illinois, in Henry County, Iowa, and in other places. I think there is no question about it that the coming of the Alsatian Amish in the first half of the nineteenth century represents the coming of new blood that was different. I do not know whether it was better or not so good, but it was different. The earlier immigrants had settled down in the wilderness; they had pulled out the stumps; they had gone through hard days; and they had come to the place where they were taking life a little more easy again. They had cultivated the soil, and they had cultivated their spiritual lives too. I think, however, that some of them had got settled in their ways a little too much. Then the Alsatian Amish came and brought some new life.

The Swartzendrubers, the Gingerichs, and the Kempfs, whom we heard about this morning, came from Germany, during the same time that the Alsatian Amish arrived, although settling in different communities, and they also represent some new blood. Then about 15 years after the first Johnson County church was organized (the year 1865 is a good dividing point), there began a period of Mennonite history which is sometimes referred to as the era of the Great Awakening. Although this movement affected both Mennonite and Amish communities in America, its early leadership came chiefly from the Mennonites. The leading personalities in the Great Awakening were John F. Funk (originally from Pennsylvania, then Chicago, and finally Elkhart), John S. Coffman (originally from Virginia, then Indiana), and John M. Brenneman of

Ohio. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit these three men were used to bring the Great Awakening to the Mennonite churches of America. One of the fruits of this work was the rise of a new generation of leaders. With few exceptions the outstanding leaders of the Church in the next generation were men converted under the preaching of John S. Coffman. Among them were T. M. Erb, Noah Mack, J. M. Kreider, Daniel Kauffman, Daniel Lapp, Aaron Loucks, and George R. Brunk, all of whom were Mennonites. Then there were D. D. Miller, J. S. Hartzler, D. H. Bender, G. L. Bender, I. W. Royer, and others from the Amish branch of the Church. This is the generation of preachers who were known far and wide when I first began to be aware of what was going on in the Church. What the Great Awakening did was to bring new life to the churches. The new generation of preachers and evangelists emphasized a Christian experience, less emphasis on form and law. They stressed the study of the Word, revival meetings, Sunday schools, young people's meetings, Bible conferences, and missions.

In part it was the Civil War experience which helped to bring on the Great Awakening. Both Brenneman and Funk were aroused when they began to realize that lifelessness in the Church was responsible for numbers of young men, both Mennonites and Amish, in the army, so that loyalty to the principle of nonresistance in the American Mennonite Church was seriously threatened. Determination to do something to remedy this situation was one of the factors which caused John F. Funk to establish his church paper, the *Herald of Truth*, in 1864. The very first issue of the new paper had an article on nonresistance, on the front page. Funk and Brenneman both wrote pamphlets on nonresistance, and in many other ways called the brotherhood back to the way of Christ and the Church.

I was born in 1896, and it was about 1915, the year of transition referred to earlier, that I first became consciously interested in the affairs of the Church. In those days I was troubled about some things in the Iowa churches. I knew that we had an excellent community; and I knew too that we had some of the finest people that could be found anywhere. I also began to be aware, however, that we had no foreign missionaries on the field, while other communities did. I became conscious of the fact that, for some reason, the missionary offerings of the Iowa churches were lower than those of many other congregations. As I met with young people who came from other parts of the Church, it seemed to me that many of them were more interested in the work of the church than I was, or that the Iowa young people generally here were. It seemed to me that some of them had higher standards of conduct, and a higher type of

social life than the Iowa young people had. I noticed that some congregations in other places had mission Sunday schools, and we didn't have any, except at Daytonville, which was a West Union project. I felt that we were lacking in vitality. I was unable to analyze the situation, but I did feel that not everything was as it should have been.

As I look back to those days of 1915 I realize that some of my feeling was simply boyish impatience. I believe, however, that some of it was justified. If I may attempt an analysis, I would say that I believe the Iowa churches had been on the edge of the Great Awakening of which I spoke, but that they never got quite into the middle of it. There is evidence that the Iowa Amish Mennonites were influenced by the Awakening, and that there was some genuine vitality among them. The Sunday school movement is an illustration. Under the leadership of Joseph J. Swartzendruber, S. D. Guengerich and others there was an Iowa Sunday school as early as 1870. There are many congregations in the Mennonite Church which had no Sunday schools until much later than that. Iowa had them, both in Deer Creek and Sharon, and in 1951 the Sharon Amish churches still have them, even though there are many Old Order Amish churches which never had Sunday schools, and do not have them today.

A second evidence of vitality in the Johnson County churches is the German school. This work began in the 1880's, or perhaps earlier than that, and in 1890 the "German School Association of the Old Order Amish Mennonites" was organized and incorporated. The stated purpose of the organization was to teach and promulgate the principles of the church, and to encourage the youth in the charitable and benevolent work of the church. Here a school was established, money was raised, and an endowment fund was established, four years before the Elkhart Institute was founded. Is it too much to believe that this venture had possibilities of developing into a Hesston or something of that sort? Other schools have had beginnings just as small as this.

A third evidence that the Iowa churches were at the edge of the Great Awakening is S. D. Guengerich himself. He had attended the Millersville, Pennsylvania, Normal School, and he was the chief influence behind the Iowa School Association and the "Dutch College," as it was sometimes called. He was the author of some "principles of education" which compare favorably with those of Christopher Dock. In 1878 S. D. Guengerich founded *Der Christliche Jugendfreund*, the first Mennonite young people's paper in America. He published the paper for three years after which it was taken over by the Mennonite Publishing Company at Elkhart. In this venture Guengerich was attempting to do in 1878 what the *Youth's Christian Companion* and the *Words of Cheer*

are doing today. S. D. Guengerich was interested in missions; he promoted interest in relief work in Armenia; he published articles in the newspapers correcting untrue statements made about the Amish; he wrote to members of the Iowa legislature urging certain legislation in matters affecting the nonresistant faith of the Mennonites.

A fourth evidence of vitality among the Amish Mennonites of Johnson County was the ministerial leadership, that of the Swartzendrubers in particular. One of the charts on display at this centennial meeting shows 26 bishops, ministers, and deacons among the descendants of Jacob Swartzendruber, the first Johnson County bishop. It seems clear that this family line has carried with it something of the qualities which make for ministerial leadership. A few things should be said about the first Jacob Swartzendruber. The pamphlets on display at this centennial contain some of his writings. One of these, a letter addressed to the Amish Conference of 1865, gives a remarkable analysis of the state of the church at that time. Jacob Swartzendruber was a student, a writer, and a collector of historical materials. He was able to express himself, to analyze issues, and he possessed a strong personality, and a most vigorous character. His writings on nonresistance compare favorably with those of John F. Funk. Although not as well educated as Funk, and lacking the latter's breadth of interest, Swartzendruber seems to have been fully the equal of Funk in native capacity. Some of his descendants have possessed similar capacity. Simon Gingerich, a great grandson, has been bishop of the Wayland congregation, president of the Mennonite Publication Board, and twice moderator of the Mennonite General Conference. Sanford C. Yoder, another great grandson, has served as bishop, moderator of General Conference, and was for many years secretary of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, and president of Goshen College.

If the evidences of vitality here outlined are sound, and if it is also true that the Amish Mennonites of Iowa were at the edge of the Great Awakening without quite finding its center, why was this so? Was it because of the people? Was the leadership to blame? Was it the Iowa climate? What was it? When the Great Awakening reached the Alsatian Amish churches, and began to bring changes in a congregation, the entire congregation usually changed without a division. This was true in Wayne County, Ohio, and to a large extent in Fulton County, Ohio. The same thing occurred in Illinois, and in Henry County, Iowa. These Alsatian churches for the most part became Amish Mennonite, with no Old Order Amish remaining. Among the congregations of the older immigration, which first settled in Pennsylvania and then moved westward, in

some cases the Great Awakening brought little or no change. In other cases it resulted in a division, one group becoming Amish Mennonite, and the other remaining Old Order Amish. This is what happened in Johnson County. Why was this so? Why did the East Union swarm leave the old hive in 1879? Why did not the entire Sharon congregation change as did the Wayland congregation? What is the explanation of the crisis in the two Deer Creek churches in 1913 and 1915; and why did one of these congregations unite with the Western A. M. conference and the other with the Conservative A. M. conference? One might also inquire into the cause of the difficulties experienced by the congregation in Wright County, a branch of the Johnson County church, but time will not permit.

Whatever the answers to these questions, it is certain that the events referred to above served as a crucible in which the strengths and weaknesses of the Iowa Amish, and of their leaders, were tried as by fire. The Bible describes the strengths and the weaknesses, the virtues and sins, of the people of that day, and we may as well do likewise. This morning Elmer Swartzendruber referred to some difficulties in the early days, and mentioned the removal of assistant Bishop Joseph Keim to Illinois, and of Deacon John Mishler to Polk County, Iowa, because of differences between them and Jacob Swartzendruber, the bishop. The fact is that Mishler's office was taken from him before he moved to Polk County. Minister John Gingerich, Swartzendruber's own brother-in-law, was also deprived of his office. Whether Keim would also have been silenced, had he not moved away, is not certain. It so happens that John Gingerich was Melvin Gingerich's great grandfather, and John Mishler was my great grandfather. So Melvin and I are here today representing the line of silenced church officials.

I have often wondered why these events occurred. Was it due to Mishler's obstinacy? When I examine myself and some of the other Kempfs and Mishlers whom I know I am sometimes inclined to think that that may have been part of the reason. But when I see that Jacob Swartzendruber had his difficulties with others as well, I tend to the conclusion that he was also in part to blame. At least some who knew Jacob Swartzendruber said that he was too dogmatic, that he did not bend easily enough, that he did not always administer discipline in the spirit of Matthew XVIII. Was the *Unterdrückung* which he suffered, as referred to in his writings, always brought on by others, or did he bring some of it on himself? Sometimes we parents, in the bringing up of our children, have discouraging moments also. On one of those occasions my wife once asked me: "And how did you do when you were sixteen?"

Then I recalled some things from my own youthful days, and it helped to a better understanding of the problem at hand. Perhaps the same principles which hold in the bringing up of the family, also hold in the shepherding of the church family.

Was the separation which led to the formation of the East Union congregation in 1879 necessary? I am not certain whether it was or not. We know, however, that Henry County ministers came to Johnson County to minister to the little dissatisfied group, and that Bishop Frederick Swartzendruber did not approve of it. Then a compromise was attempted in which the Henry County ministers were to leave the schismatic group alone; Frederick Swartzendruber was to work with the Henry County minister; and the schismatic group was to attend Swartzendruber's church and be satisfied. But for some reason the compromise did not succeed, and a new congregation was organized. We are told that one reason why Swartzendruber could not work with Sebastian Gerig was because the latter did not wear his frock coat one rainy Sunday. When Christian Wery moved to Iowa he had planned to unite with Frederick Swartzendruber's church; but when Wery's raincoat was disapproved of Wery joined the new group which became the East Union church. When we remember that today Frederick Swartzendruber's grandson is Sebastian Gerig's successor as bishop in the Henry County church, we are reminded how time and patience can overcome these little differences. There is reason to wish, therefore, that the church difficulties which led to the division of 1879 could have been avoided.

I tremble sometimes when I realize how those difficulties, now almost a century old, could have prevented me from becoming a member of the Mennonite Church. My grandmother was seventeen years old when her father had the office of deacon taken from him, and she was twenty-one when her family moved to Polk County in 1868. She was married that same year and remained in Johnson County; but she and her husband Samuel Kempf, my grandfather, were not members of the church. They did not unite with the Church until eleven years later when their oldest daughter, my mother, was ten years old. And when they did join the Church it was with the new group, being baptized in 1879 by Joseph Stuckey of Illinois. Is it not likely that the difficulties between bishop and deacon in the early sixties had something to do with the belated conversion of my own grandparents? And if the Illinois and the Henry County ministers had not come to help the little dissatisfied group, would my grandparents ever have united with the Mennonite Church? And if not, would I be a member of the Church today? I cannot answer these

questions, of course; but the asking of them should help us to realize how serious the consequences of church difficulties can be; and how it is easily possible that the children of even the third and fourth generation may suffer for the mistakes of their ancestors.

If the difficulties of the 1860's were a cause for the division of 1879, it is likely true that they also contributed to the crisis in the Lower Deer Creek Church which came to a head in 1913. On the surface, the issue in 1912 was the ownership of telephones. It is possible, however, that if the difficulties of 1863 between Bishop Jacob Swartzendruber and minister John Gingerich had been kept from reaching so deeply into the life of the church, and of the families of the church, the telephone question could have been more easily solved in 1913 than it was. For here again the principals in the picture included the Swartzendrubers and the Gingerichs; the bishop now being Jacob F. Swartzendruber, grandson of the first bishop, while the grandsons of the silenced minister John Gingerich were active in the group which desired the telephones. In other words, personality and family differences, as well as differing views on vital issues, help to explain some of these events in Iowa Mennonite history. Perhaps more attention to Bible study and the understanding of fundamental issues, and less attention to personal and other smaller matters, will help us to make more progress in the future.

Earlier in this paper it was suggested that prior to 1915 the Iowa Mennonite churches were at the edge of the Great Awakening, but that they never quite found their way into the main stream of the life of the church. It seems to me that an article by Daniel Kauffman, published in the *Herald of Truth* in 1896, serves to support this view. Daniel Kauffman himself, perhaps better than any other single person, represents the finest fruit of the Great Awakening. For this reason this article seems significant. In 1896 Kauffman made a preaching tour through the Iowa churches. Then after returning to his home in Versailles, Missouri, he wrote this article for the *Herald* in which he said there were a number of Amish congregations in eastern Iowa whose ministers seem to be in earnest, and who have the active cooperation of their congregations. But, he said, these congregations needed a good evangelist who would cut loose from all other work and devote an entire year to evangelistic work in Iowa alone. He said there was not a single minister in the state who could teach the faith ably in the English language. Several could do good work in the German language, but this language was passing out, and men were needed who could preach in English. Kauffman said that in numerous places, where scattered members now live, congregations could be built if proper leadership were provided. But if this would not

be provided these people would move away or be lost to the church. Then Kauffman's article also says that in the past the brethren in Iowa had held too rigidly to old customs, while at the same time not receiving sufficient indoctrination in the fundamental principles of the Gospel. By way of illustration, he said that the wearing of buttons (a restriction of men) had been emphasized more than the wearing of gold (a restriction of God). New customs and practices were forbidden without regard to their relation to the Gospel; and as the people came to see that old rules had no Scripture to support them they tended to break away from them. And then, not having been properly indoctrinated in the Gospel, they tended to regard *all* restriction as of men. "Thus," he says, "the principle of self denial is lost sight of, and they are delivered, body and soul, to the world." Then Kauffman says what he thinks should be done about it:

What is the remedy? *Preach the Word*. Let our Church, Amish or Mennonite, send ministers into Iowa, who have the ability and the inclination to defend our faith in its purity, and assist Bro. Gerig, Bro. Graber, and the rest of our faithful Amish Mennonite ministers to indoctrinate our people, and teach them to avoid, *for conscience' sake*, the sinful practices of worldliness on the one hand, and the ruinous dogmas of formalism on the other. I am not advocating proselytism in any form; but when we see that many of our most zealous formalists have broken over and plunged headlong into the world, where in the name of Him who has commanded us to "go preach" is our authority for sitting down, and not presenting the "golden mien"—the pure Word of God?

Yes, Iowa needs an evangelist, one who has the ability to defend the faith and practice of our church, one whose whole heart is in the work, one who is not afraid nor ashamed to preach and to wear plain clothes, one whose faith and practice is neither *formal* nor *formless*. May God grant that such an evangelist may be found for this field.

These words were written in 1896, and they do suggest that our Iowa congregations had not yet reached the point where they could be of greatest usefulness in the life of the church as a whole. This condition continued for some time after 1896, but it seems to me that something of a turning point was reached about 1915, and that this marks the beginning of a new era. Why this point had not been reached earlier I am not sure. Perhaps we as a people needed the time from 1851 to 1915 in which to grow up, just as a boy needs a period of time in which to become a man. In 1951, however, on the occasion of this hundredth anniversary, I feel certain that we are in a new day. The days of friction are over, I trust. Time has mellowed us. Our congregations have found their way into the general life of the Church. Our preaching has more emphasis on

the Christian experience than it formerly had ; and we have not forgotten the application of the form either.

The descendants of the Swartzendrubers, who provided so much leadership in the early days, are still with us. Amos Gingerich and Paul Guengerich of this family line are ministers at West Union. Elmer Swartzendruber is bishop at Upper Deer Creek and Fairview, and Morris Swartzendruber is minister. George Reber is a deacon at Lower Deer Creek ; A. Lloyd Swartzendruber is a minister at East Union ; and Simon Gingerich is bishop in the Henry County churches. The rest of us are here too, and we are all working together, and happy to do so. What is more, the Iowa congregations have found their way into the life of the Mennonite Church as a whole. In the case of the Old Order Amish, you can visit their churches anywhere you will, from east to west, and you will find the name of Ira Nissley well-known among them. Abner G. Yoder of the West Union church was one time moderator of General Conference. Elmer Swartzendruber is a leader of the Conservative A. M. Conference and a member of the Mennonite Central Committee. Simon Gingerich has been president of the Mennonite Publication Board and was twice moderator of General Conference. Sanford C. Yoder was for a long time well known as an evangelist, as secretary of the Mission Board, and then, during a most critical period, as president of Gosen College.

Whatever validity there may have been to the feeling of my boyhood days, as to a lack of vision and vitality in the Iowa churches, I feel sure that we have more than recaptured the earlier vision of S. D. Guengerich. The Old Dutch College has long since passed away, but today we have the Iowa Mennonite School. Amos Gingerich, descendant of Jacob Swartzendruber was one of the leaders in the movement which led to the foundation of the new school, and a significant movement it was. In 1951 the Iowa churches have their representatives on the mission field, at home and abroad. They have relief workers on the foreign field, and they have mission Sunday schools.

It seems to me that on the occasion of this one hundredth anniversary we can say that we have arrived in a new day. I do not know how many people read Daniel Kauffman's article in the *Herald of Truth* in 1896, nor do I know how much influence that article had. I believe, however, that that for which he was pleading has now come to pass. Perhaps it came a little later in Iowa than it did in some other sections of the church, but I believe it has come. Today we are happy to work together, whether it be East Union or West Union, Upper Deer Creek or Lower Deer Creek, Wellman, Iowa City, or the Amish churches. Each in its own way is making its contribution to the cause of the church, both near

and far. May the Lord bless us so that we may continue in this great service. Let us pray that if the Lord tarries until another hundred years have passed, that those who gather for that second centennial service may be able to say that we who stand at the beginning of the second century have been as faithful to our charge as were those of the first century.

EVALUATING OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

By Simon Gingerich, Wayland, Iowa

Being removed a full century from an incident and having to depend pretty much on tradition and fragments of history, certainly are handicaps in arriving at true motivations and proper evaluations of the lives of our forefathers. It is something like when a boy at school studied certain classics. I often wondered what the reaction of the authors would be if they could hear our interpretations of their writings. No doubt, we touched some things which they did mean to convey, but quite likely we left some of the deeper motivations of their souls untouched.

Today as we scan the history of our forefathers from their pioneer days to our present situation, certainly, we should be able to see benefits which we have received through their efforts, their teachings, and their writings though we are quite remotely separated from them. As surely as family traits and characteristics can often be seen in the third and fourth generations, so we can also trace principles and factors of Faith believed and taught by founders of churches by observing those who have embraced the tenets of their predecessors though removed from them by centuries. This should be true of us today. There may be some variations of applications due to environments, however, the underlying principles should be the same.

Personally, as I reflect upon the motivations and purposes of our forefathers as they faced the privations of pioneer life in establishing a church in a new community, I treasure their pure motives and the Faith which they preserved for us. Well may we say with the Psalmist, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea I have a goodly heritage."

I want to mention a few things which appear to be worthy principles which seem to come to the forefront as manifested in the lives of our forefathers: *A deepseated devotion to the Word*. This is reflected in letters and writings which we have with us today. Some of these were written to individuals in whom they took special interest admonishing

them to read regularly the Word of God and be given to meditation in order that the Holy Spirit may direct them, and that they should not neglect their daily devotion in prayer. Letters to conferences also impress one with the spirit of sincerity and devotion to the Lord. In time of war calling attention to what they considered a loose application of the non-resistant principles as taught by our Saviour. The attention of Conference was also called to such things as unchristian conduct at weddings and other social gatherings, all of which impresses one with the high motivations and standards of life the petitioner possessed.

The Sacrificial Spirit in order to Maintain Their Faith. The movement of our forefathers from Europe to America was, no doubt, for the purpose of getting away from the compulsory Military Training laws of the Land. Their comfortable homes and a profitable business with a goodly patronage were sacrificed in order that they might exercise a clear conscience based on the Word of God. While they were removed from the great reformation of the sixteenth century by several hundred years, yet they treasured the Faith of the Martyrs among whom were some of their forefathers, and gladly made these material sacrifices in order to maintain their Faith.

Separation from the World. This principal being one of the plain teachings of the Bible, both of the Old and the New Testament, was also embraced by our forefathers. In the fast developing epoch of American history to which they came and in which they lived their indignation was aroused against the ever changing fashions and modes of dressing which they proposed to keep from encroaching upon the church by discipline and a standard garb for both men and women. This was also an age of new inventions which to the leaders of the church seemed to be another avenue of worldliness and covetousness which caused them to put a ban upon certain things. The casual on-looker or the person ignorant of what the Bible teaches on separation from the world declares this to be out-ward religion only or dismisses it as a big piece of foolishness, not being aware of any deep-seated sincerity and devotion that some leaders and laity of the church might have had.

Integrity and Mutual Helpfulness was taught and practiced by our ancestors. To "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17) and "To do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of Faith" (Gal. 6:10) were scriptural injunctions to be practiced and exemplified by all members of the church. Those who practiced deceit of questionable business methods were disciplined but the needs of the worthy poor were supplied. A man's word was to be as good as his note. We still expect this to be true. Two bankers, whom

I personally knew, were riding together across this community from Iowa City to Washington, Iowa. (This was along about 1930, at the time when many banks of the state were in financial straits.) One of the men was well acquainted in the community and would point to the well kept homesteads along the way and remarked that "Most of these people's word is as good as their note". It is their industry and honesty that is the stability of my bank." During the civil war of 1861-65 the government provided exemption from military service to those who were drafted but were conscientiously opposed to military service. The church provided the exemption money for those who were too poor to pay it themselves.

Concern for the Religious welfare of the Youth is quite evident as we take note of the provisions made for them. They were much concerned about proper instruction for their children. Since the German language was their mother tongue they were very careful to have their children speak and read it. It was the language of the Minister so this was also essential from a religious standpoint. They also organized and maintained Sunday schools where children of school age were taught to read the German while those who could read were assigned chapters of the Bible to read. Even some German day schools were provided by the church. When the Mennonite church periodical known as "*Des Herold der Wahrheit*" was published it found its way into their homes. "*Der Christliche Jugendfreund*," a periodical designed especially for moral and religious instruction to the growing youth, was published by these early pioneers. A Catechism was also prepared by a group of laymen and ministers for the instruction of children in the home and Sunday school the questions and answers of which were concise and covered the fundamental principles and doctrines of the entire Bible as believed by us today. I still remember some of these questions and answers as I learned them when a boy some sixty years ago.

May I be allowed to give some personal experiences which I have always treasured and which have proven to be great blessings to me as I grew up and shouldered the responsibilities of life and service? It was my privilege to attend Sunday school all of my life, first in this community and later in other communities where I lived. But right here in this community is where the foundation of my Faith was laid. Our Sunday school was held at the Evergreen school house. Michael D. Miller and Daniel Schoettler, I think, were the superintendents. Daniel Schoettler was my teacher. He did not spend the whole class period in teaching us the German language but used the Catechism as a guide in our religious instruction and also used the practical applications given

at the close of each division or lesson in the book. This together with what I was taught when I attended German day school under the instruction of my great-uncle Christian Swartzendruber, I treasure very highly. We used the Bible as a reader and usually at the end of each chapter he would comment on what was read. After reading the Genesis account of the creation he told of some theories which he had heard and read, such as, that the days of creation were long periods of time, perhaps ages. Then told us that the Lord used men to write the Bible in terms common to men and that he believed the safe way is to accept these terms in their common usage. The Bible was designed so that the honest and, even elementary mind, could grasp its truth and he warned us against accepting fascinating theories which were unproven and which might lead us away from full confidence in God. Another incident which I remember was when he commented upon the clothing God provided for Adam and Eve after the fall. He made it clear that he despised the fantastic ornamentation in dress of his day, then told us the story of a great man who lived in a barrel, whose only possession was a cup from which to eat and drink. This man, he said, one day saw a shepherd boy go to the fresh water spring and dip up water with his hand so he threw away even his cup as being useless. (Later in life I learned that he was referring to Diogenes.) My uncle admitted that this was an extreme attitude yet he impressed us against the extravagance of the day. However, he was a man that practiced what he preached, as he used a large corn-stalk as a pointer. My purpose in using this little deviation is to show that our progenitors have left us a "GOODLY HERITAGE" which was not the product of ignorant and unlearned minds but rather the product of intelligent minds imbued with a devoted spirit and consecrated heart and soul.

Today we have, in this community, represented, about three or four divisions of the church which are fundamentally based upon the doctrine of Jesus Christ as the son of God and only Saviour of mankind. The primary differences lie in the application of Christian principles to life. All of us are coping with the same problems, namely, that of combatting against the worldliness and ungodly influence of the world about us lest we be absorbed by them. National Communism, Militarism, Worldly Amusements, Sports, Higher Criticism, Athletic craze and kindred influences are a menace to our spiritual heritage which we have received from our forefathers which is fundamentally sound.

If we will be able to leave to the rising generation the Spiritual Heritage which has been handed down to us, we must provide for the proper development of the intellect, maintain high moral standards of life and

conduct, teach a simple faith in God, and constantly have a concern for the proper direction of our youths energies in directing them into channels in keeping with the teachings of the Word of God and our Saviour's great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mar. 15:16).

CHURCH DISTRICTS AND ORDAINED MEN FROM 1851 TO 1953

This chart gives the various church districts, divisions and subdivisions from the beginning in 1851 to the present with the names of each Bishop, Minister or Deacon and the years within which he served in that particular congregation. Therefore a man's name may be found in more than one place because he served in one or more church districts. Those who have served in the ministry in the community at the time of this publication (1954, Jan. 1) for more than 40 years are the following:

Noah D. Yoder.....	47 years
D. J. Fisher.....	46 years
J. F. Swartzendruber	46 years
Peter Kinsinger	45 years
Frederick Swartzendruber	43 years
John I. Plank.....	43 years
David Reber	40 years
Joseph L. Hershberger	40 years

Since it is not practical to place this information in diagram form as had at first been planned, each bracket group is numbered and described so it can readily be seen what and when its origin was.

No. 1.

OOA. The only and original congregation from 1851-1862.

Jacob Swartzendruber	M. 1851-53
	B. 1853-62
John Gingerich	M. 1851-64
Peter Brenneman	M. 1851-62
Frederick Swartzendruber ..	D. 1852-62
Joseph Keim	M. 1855-58
	B. 1858-64
Joseph Swartzendruber	D. 1856-60
	M. 1860-62
Benjamin Schrock	M. 1858-62
John Mishler	M. 1859-62
Joseph Marner	M. 1861-62

No. 2.

Deer Creek. OOA.

Increase in membership and in area called for dividing into Nos. 2 and 3. 1862-1877.

Jacob Swartzendruber	B. 1862-68
Frederick Swartzendruber ..	D. 1862-65
	B. 1865-77
Joseph Swartzendruber	M. 1862-69
	B. 1869-77
Jacob Marner	M. 1862-81
Peter Brenneman	M. 1862-77
Abner Yoder	B. 1868-69
Noah D. Yoder.....	M. 1869-77
John Zimmerman	M. 1873-77

Legend:	OOA	Old Order Amish	B	Bishop
	CAM	Conservative Amish Mennonite	M	Minister
	OM	(Old) Mennonite	D	Deacon
	BAM	Beachey Amish Mennonite		

No. 3.

Sharon. OOA.

Increase in membership and area called for dividing No. 1 into Nos. 2 and 3. 1862-1877.

Jacob SwartzendruberB. 1862-66
Abner YoderB. 1866-77
Benjamin SchrockM. 1862-77
John MishlerM. 1862-64
Paul HershbergerM. 1875-80
Daniel YoderD. 1875-80
Christian J. MillerM. 1875-77
John I. Plank.....M. 1875-77
Henry HershbergerM. 1875-77

No. 4.

Upper Deer Creek.

OOA 1877-1915, **CAM** 1915-

Increase in membership called for dividing No. 2 into Nos. 4 and 6 in 1877. Difference of opinion on matters of church polity called for change in 1915.

Abner YoderB. 1877-83
William K. Miller.....M. 1877-83
B. 1883-1914
Jonathan J. Plank.....M. 1888-1904
Gideon A. Yoder.....M. 1896-1919
B. 1919-34
Noah D. Yoder.....M. 1877-1902
Peter P. Swartzendruber.M. 1905-14
Elmer G. Swartzendruber.M. 1917-31
B. 1931-
Amos C. Swartzendruber.M. 1917-36
Noah S. Miller.....D. 1924-26
D. 1929-36
Albert S. Miller.....M. 1932-36

No. 5.

Upper Deer Creek-Fairview. CAM.

Increase in membership and area called for extension of No. 4. 1936-

Elmer G. Swartzendruber.B. 1936-
Amos C. Swartzendruber.M. 1936-39
Albert S. Miller.....M. 1936-
Noah S. Miller.....D. 1936-
Jacob J. Miller.....M. 1937-
Jonas I. Yoder.....M. 1946-47
Morris E. Swartzen-
druberM. 1949-

No. 6.

Lower Deer Creek.

OOA 1877-1913, **OM** 1913-

Increase in membership called for dividing of No. 2 into Nos. 4 and 6 in 1877. Difference of opinion on matters of church polity called for change in 1913.

Abner YoderB. 1877-83
Peter BrennemanM. 1877-81
B. 1881-89
Jacob F. Swartzendruber.M. 1878-87
B. 1887-1913
David ReberM. 1878-1918
Joseph J. Gingerich.....M. 1878-1916
William K. Miller.....B. 1883-87
John GundenM. 1887-1904
Jacob S. YoderM. 1906-16
Joseph L. Hershberger...M. 1913-
David D. Miller.....M. 1917-52
John Y. Swartzendruber.M. 1918-19
B. 1919-
George ReberD. 1918-
Levi C. Schrock.....D. 1931-
Samuel B. Nafziger.....D. 1945-52
Robert YoderM. 1952-
Eli YutzkyM. 1952-

No. 7.

North Sharon. OOA.

Increase in membership called for dividing No. 3 into Nos. 7 and 8. 1877-1938.

Abner YoderB. 1877-83
John I. Plank.....M. 1877-1920
Henry HershbergerM. 1877-1905

Peter KinsingerM. 1878-84
 B. 1884-1923
 Elias Swartzendruber ...D. 1884-94
 Jonathan PlankM. 1895-05
 Isaac HelmuthM. 1903-15
 B. 1915-38
 Samuel KempfM. 1905-38
 Jeremiah StutzmanM. 1913-15
 Jonas D. Otto.....M. 1919-38
 Chris B. Miller.....M. 1935-38
 Jonathan M. Miller.....M. 1937-38

No. 8.

South Sharon. OOA.

Increase in membership called for
 dividing No. 3 into Nos. 7 and 8.
 1877-1916.

Abner YoderB. 1877-83
 Frederick Swartzen-
 druberB. 1877-95
 Benjamin SchrockM. 1877-79
 Christian J. MillerM. 1877-86
 B. 1886-1909
 Peter J. Brenneman.....M. 1882-1918
 Daniel J. Miller.....M. 1902-08
 Manasses J. Miller.....D. 1906-16
 Chris M. Yoder.....M. 1908-16
 Noah D. Yoder.....M. 1907-10
 B. 1910-16
 Jacob F. Swartzendruber.B. 1913-16

No. 9.

Union. OM.

Members from Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8.
 Difference of opinion on church
 polity caused change. 1884-1897.

Christian WeryM. 1884-85
 B. 1885-97
 Jacob J. Swartzendruber.M. 1889-94
 Jacob B. Yoder.....D. 1891-97

No. 10.

West Union. OM.

Increase of membership and area
 caused dividing of No. 9 into Nos.
 10 and 11. 1897-

Christian WeryB. 1897-1909

Samuel ErbM. 1898-?
 Daniel KauffmanM. 1901-11
 Jacob K. Yoder.....D. 1902-05
 M. 1905-09
 B. 1909-26
 Joseph WhittakerM. 1907-?
 William S. Guengerich...M. 1909-35
 Abner G. Yoder.....D. 1909-24
 B. 1924-42
 John Y. Swartzendruber..B. 1942-
 Peter P. Swartzendruber.M. 1914-39
 Harvey M. Yoder.....D. 1929-
 Chris J. Yoder.....M. 1935-46
 Daniel D. Kauffman.....M. 1943-44
 Amos GingerichM. 1939-
 Paul T. Guengerich.....M. 1947-

No. 11.

East Union. OM.

Increase of membership and area
 caused dividing of No. 9 into
 Nos. 10 and 11. 1897-

Christian WeryB. 1897-1914
 Jacob B. YoderD. 1897-1934
 Amos I. Yoder.....M. 1898-1906
 B. 1906-08
 Daniel J. Fisher.....M. 1907-29
 B. 1929-
 Fred J. Gingerich.....M. 1908-?
 Sanford C. Yoder.....B. 1913-29
 Joseph C. Brenneman....D. 1917-19
 M. 1919-38
 Edward J. Shetler.....M. 1924-50
 Henry H. Miller.....D. 1933-
 Harold BrennemanM. 1942-45
 A. Lloyd Swartzendruber.M. 1946-
 J. John Miller.....M. 1953-

No. 12.

Wellman. OM.

An extension of No. 10. 1935-
 William S. Guengerich....M. 1935-49
 Edward DienerM. 1926-53
 Henry KuhnsD. 1935-
 George S. Miller.....M. 1938-
 Ammon StoltzfusM. 1941-
 Max YoderM. 1948-
 Wilford StutzmanD. 1951-
 Perry J. Blosser.....B. 1942-

No. 13.**Daytonville. OM.**

An extension of No. 12. 1952-

Ezra ShenkM. 1952-

Perry J. Blosser.....B. 1952-

No. 14.**Iowa City. OM.**

An outgrowth of OM churches of community. 1927-

Norman HobbsM. 1931-51

Virgil BrennemanM. 1952-

Daniel J. Fisher.....B. 1927-

No. 15.**Parnell Mission. OM.**

An extension of No. 10. 1948-

John YoderM. 1951-

John Y. Swartzendruber....B. 1948-

No. 16.**Iowa Valley. OM.**

An extension from Nos. 6 and 11. 1952-

Henry M. Yoder.....M. 1952-

Daniel J. Fisher.....B. 1952-

No. 17.**North East Sharon. OOA.**

Increase in membership called for dividing of No. 7 into Nos. 17 and 18. 1938-

Tobias MillerM. 1942-

Benedict GingerichM. 1942-

Daniel J. CoblentzD. 1943-44

D. 1951-

Moses W. Yoder.....B. 1947-

Moses F. Miller.....D. 1947-51

No. 18.**North West Sharon. OOA.**

Increase of membership called for dividing of No. 7 into Nos. 17 and 18. 1938-

Isaac HelmuthB. 1938-41

Samuel KempfM. 1938-41

Jonas D. OttoM. 1938-48

Chris B. Miller.....M. 1938-

Jonathan B. Miller.....M. 1938-39

B. 1939-48

Truman MillerM. 1948-50

B. 1950-

Lester B. Miller.....M. 1949-

No. 19.**South East Sharon. OOA.**

Increase of membership called for dividing No. 8 into Nos. 19 and 20. 1916-42.

Noah D. Yoder.....B. 1916-21

Manasses J. Miller.....D. 1916-36

Chris M. YoderM. 1916-41

Harvey StutzmanM. 1919-23

William K. Miller.....B. 1924-25

Edwin HershbergerM. 1923-24

B. 1924-42

Enos C. Swartzendruber ...M. 1930-42

Sam W. Bender.....B. 1937-43

Isaac HelmuthB. 1921-24

No. 20.**South West Sharon. OOA.**

Increase of membership called for dividing No. 8 into Nos. 19 and 20. 1916-36.

Jacob F. Swartzendruber...B. 1916-24

Lloyd C. Swartzendruber...M. 1918-19

William S. Yoder.....M. 1919-27

B. 1927-36

Emanuel C. Beachy.....M. 1920-21

John SwantzM. 1923-36

Noah S. Miller.....D. 1927-29

Chris M. Yoder.....M. 1930-36

No. 21.**Middle East Sharon. OOA.**

Increase of membership called for dividing No. 19 into Nos. 21 and 22. 1942-

Edwin HershbergerB. 1942-52

Fred NissleyM. 1943-

Sam MastD. 1943-

Levi S. Schrock.....M. 1945-

No. 22.

South East Sharon. OOA.

Increase of membership called for
dividing No. 19 into Nos. 21 and
22. 1942-

- Edwin HershbergerB. 1942-44
- Enos C. Swartzendruber ...M. 1942-44
B. 1944-
- Jonas BeacheyM. 1943-
- Moses F. Miller.....D. 1949-
- Enos D. Yoder.....M. 1953-

No. 23.

Middle West Sharon. OOA.

Increase of membership called for
dividing No. 20 into Nos. 23 and
24. 1936-

- William S. YoderB. 1936-
- John A. Miller.....M. 1937-
- Daniel J. Hershberger.....M. 1941-
- Daniel J. Coblentz.....D. 1944-51
- David J. Helmuth.....M. 1947-50

No. 24.

South West Sharon. OOA.

Increase of membership called for
dividing No. 20 and Nos. 23 and
24. 1936-

- Ira A. Nissley.....B. 1936-
- John SwantzM. 1936-
- Adam A. Miller.....M. 1941-
- Enos D. Yoder.....M. 1943-53
- Chris M. Yoder.....M. 1936-41

No. 25.

Sharon Bethel. BAM.

Composed of members from the
various OOA churches. Differ-
ence of opinion on church polity
caused change. 1946-

- Jonathan M. Miller.....B. 1948-
- John C. Helmuth.....M. 1946-
- Moses E. Yoder.....M. 1946-

No. 26.

Cedar Bluff. OM.

Mission operated during 1952-53.
Now closed.

- Herman SmuckerLicensed

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Present Congregations in the Community

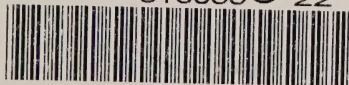
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